OPINION / A11

Randy David: But who are we to judge Thai politics? Are we in the Philippines really better off being stuck with a president we resolutely distrust?

GLOBAL PINOY / A19

Pinoy overseas workers in Seoul turn Korean girl into a Catholic believer

ACROSS / A13

19-year-old daughter of the president of the Western Mindanao State University released by abductors

Many Britons will give up sex to live to be 100

LONDON—SEX OR A LONG life? That's a tough decision for Pinoys, but for Britons?

A large number of Britons would be prepared to give up sex if it meant they would live to be 100, according to a survey Friday.

MAIN/ A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER Sunday

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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France to probe leak of Bin Laden 'death'

PARIS—FRANCE'S DEFENSE MINISTRY SAID on Saturday it could not confirm a newspaper report quoting the French secret service as saying al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden had died, but would launch an inquiry into the leak of secret papers.

French President Jacques Chirac also said that that the report was "in no way confirmed."

FRANCE/ A8

Generals lose Jusmag

SC orders ex-AFP officers, kin out of disputed land

By Armando N. Nocum

THE SUPREME COURT HAS RULED THAT RETIRED military and police officers and their families should vacate a disputed 398,602-sq.m. property in Fort Bonifacio, saying that its occupants may have been hoodwinked by "a cabal of cheats" in the government's land management office.

"This could not have come to pass without the participation of a cabal of cheats out to make a clubowner buck at the expense of the government and most likely the members of SHAI (Southside Homeowners Association Inc.)," the Supreme Court said.

In ending the 15-year dispute over the prime property inside the 39.99-ha Joint United States Military Advisory Group (Jusmag) compound, the high court also chided the military leadership for ordering eviction operations despite the fact that the tribunal had yet to rule on the matter.

The 24-page ruling, issued by the high court's second division and written by Associate Justice Cancio C. Garcia, included a reminder for Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon and his subordinates "that might is not always right; that ours is still a government of laws and not of men, be they in the civilian or military sector."

The tribunal said it would "not treat lightly any attempt to stifle, intended or otherwise, with its processes and proceedings."

The forced eviction was marked by weeping and pleas from the families that they be allowed to stay, as well as outright resistance.

The ruling was an offshoot of the controversial charges filed by retired military generals Raymundo Jurgan, Mariciano Begani, Feniniano Millenas and Jaunito Mabit and Col. Dionisidor P. Amador following the eviction of their colleagues from the Jusmag compound earlier this year.

Jurgan, a former Army brigadier general; Melchor Rosales, a former Air Force major general and now interior undersecretary, and Benjamin Defensor, a former AFP chief of staff and now ambassador at large for counterterrorism, were among those who had staunchly opposed their eviction.

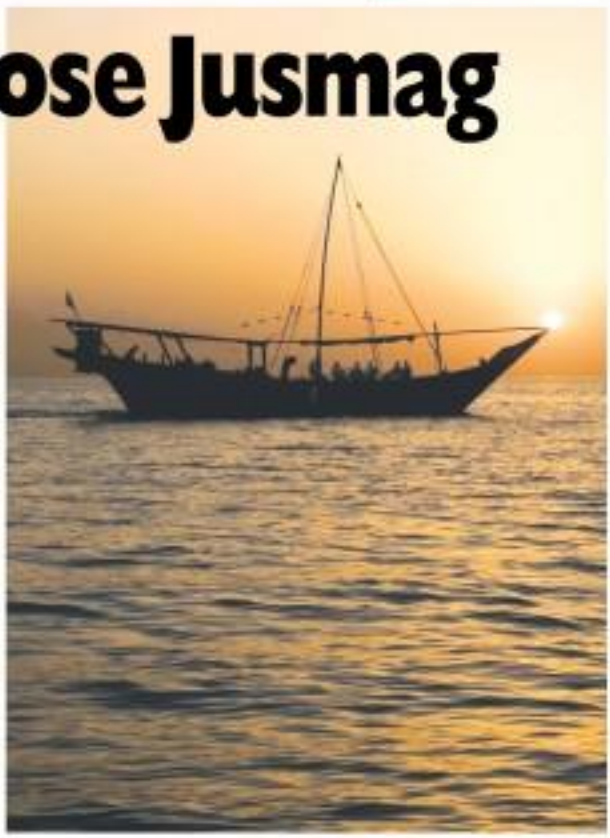
Under military housing regulations, the families of officers who have retired, resigned or died have to leave their official quarters within 60 days.

But SHAI, composed of officers' wives, claimed to have bought the property for P11.9 million.

With its ruling, the Supreme Court "reversed and set aside" a decision of the Court of Appeals upholding SHAI's ownership of the property.

Declaring Transfer Certificate of Title

GENERALS/ A6



RAMADAN ALL OVER THE WORLD. Kuwaiti men sit on the deck of a dhow, a traditional fishing vessel, at sunset near the Kuwaiti harbor, on the eve of the Islamic month of Ramadan. (See report on Page A1-4) REUTERS

WHAT'S INSIDE

Gretchen Barretto, former 'ST Queen,' is making only G-rated films from now on.

ENTERTAINMENT / H1

Beyond the Brunei beauties

LIFESTYLE / E1

A woman called 'Ama'

SUNDAY BIZ / B2

Fr. Robert Reyes, a different place, a different person —but still running

SUNDAY MAGAZINE

Senate asks SC to junk Cha-cha bid

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

THE SENATE HAS URGED THE SUPREME Court to throw out a petition to overhaul the country's 19-year-old Constitution through a people's initiative, saying it was a dangerous political maneuver that could lead to anarchy.

The petition also falsely invoked the name of God and was "manipulated by the administration," the Senate said in a position paper it filed with the high court that reflected the senators' vigorous opposition to the Malacañang-backed attempt to rewrite the Charter.

The court has scheduled oral arguments for Tuesday on what the justices have described as a "very important case."

The Charter change petition seeks to dump the country's presidential form of government and install in its place a parliamentary system while keeping President Macapagal-Arroyo and Vice President Noli de Castro in their posts until 2010.

It was filed by the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines—composed of governors, mayors and other local officials—and its citizen partner, the Ikaw ng Bayan.

SENATE/ A6

AN ARAB woman buys an Islamic head dress in preparation for the Muslim holy fasting month in Jerusalem's Old City on Friday. At right, Muslims attend a prayer in a mosque in Ilocandia in Davao City as they prepare for Ramadan. AFP/ARIF ALI, INQUIRER/MANNY PALMERO

Bar No.1 on rape case: It's about duty to client

By Volt Contreras

ONE OF THE LAWYERS SENT ON preventing "Nicole" wrong to the bar top notcher of 2005—a promising legal eagle with an impeccable political pedigree.

At 23 and with a Princeton account, Joan Alvarez de Venecia could have easily fit in the barbuda (group) of the 23-year-old Filipino complainant in the Subic rape case—that is, had the two young women met under other, friendlier, circumstances.

"This should not be a gender issue, and it doesn't mean I'm going against any fellow woman," she said, stressing that off-court issues "shouldn't really matter" for lawyers who had a duty to their clients.

Joan—whose father, lawyer Antonio de Venecia, is a brother of the Speaker of the House—is part of the battery of Filipino lawyers defending the four US Marines whom Nicole had charged with rape before the Makati

BAR/ A2

Filipinos' per capita income to reach $1,463

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

SHE MAY BE THE LEAST POPULAR OF the country's presidents, but the fortunes of Filipinos probably had never been better than under President Macapagal-Arroyo.

According to government and private economists, Philippine per capita income—or the share of each citizen in the country's wealth as measured by gross domestic product (GDP)—is estimated to reach more than $1,460 this year.

According to Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri, this will be the best per capita income level that the country has attained in the postwar era, much higher than the industrial boom years of the Marcos dictatorship and the boll run under the Ramos presidency.

Albay Rep. Joey Salceda cited a Citibank report last month which placed Philippine per capita income at $1,300.

Salceda said the US-based bank had highlighted the vast improvement in the country's per capita income, the best since the 1970s, it said.

Salceda, an economic adviser to the President, said 22 consecutive quarters

PINOY'S A9

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

Another 'Hello Garci' officer said to be up for promotion

By Dona Pazzibugan

TENSION GRIPPED PHILIPPINE NAVY HEADquarters anew yesterday as rumors spread that a ranking officer linked to the "Hello Garci" election fraud scandal would be appointed Navy chief today.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita immediately denied the rumor of a leadership change in the naval command, which is still smarting from a Marine round-off in February linked to the coup-mongering of its commandant of its own, sparking other mini rumors of a coup.

Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz Jr. also denied that there were any plans to replace Navy Flag Officer in Command Hilario Mayuga, who is presently on an official visit to the United States, with Vice Admiral Jose Ongay, current commander of the Western Command (Wescom).

Despite Ermita and Cruz's denials, some intelligence sources insisted "Mabalasa ang agap (There's a lot of talk). It cannot be ignored."

One officer said he heard they should be "on call" for a possible turnover ceremony from Mayuga to Ongay on the afternoon of Sept. 25. Rumors about Ongay becoming the next Navy chief became circulating last week among coup-disgruntled Navy officers.

Mayuga, a member of Philippine Military Academy Class 1975, is not due to retire until Dec. 9 this year. The Navy chief left for the US on Sept. 12 to deliver a speech before an international maritime security symposium at the Johns Hopkins University in Maryland.He was also scheduled to meet with US Navy chief Admiral Michael Mullen and other US Navy officials.

Ongay, a member of PMA Class 1975, meanwhile, will retire on Sept. 28 next year.

Under military regulations, an officer promoted as a major service commander should have at least a year left in the service.

ONGAY

When the alleged wiretapped tapes surfaced in June last year, Ongay denied that body was involved in wiretapping.

Other so-called "Hello Garci" generals went on to get promoted.

Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr., who was the deputy chief of staff for operations during the 2004 election, was named AFP chief of staff in July.

Newly retired Maj. Gen. Gabriel Rabaraso was named Southern Command chief last January, even if he had less than a year left in the service.

Mayuga, as then AFP Inspector General, headed a fact-finding panel that cleared Esperon, Rabaraso, two other generals and the entire military of allegations of election cheating.

Mayuga announced the panel's findings last March, although he did not fully disclose its contents. He was appointed Navy chief on Dec. 6 last year.

His predecessor, retired Vice Admiral Ernesto de Leon (PMA Class 1972), retired three months early to accommodate Mayuga. Had De Leon retired as scheduled in March 2006, Mayuga would have been disqualified from the post.

GMA would have final say on deal with Marcoses

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

MALACAÑANG HAS GIVEN the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) a free hand in haggling with former First Lady Imelda Marcos on an agreement that would finally put an end to the two-decade long litigation on the ill-gotten wealth of the Marcoses.

But Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said in a phone interview yesterday that President Macapagal-Arroyo would have the last word on any settlement.

"We are leaving the job of negotiating with the former first lady to the PCGG. Any settlement should be just and fair and in accordance with all our laws," Ermita said. "Of course, any agreement will be subject to the approval of the President."

Ermita said the government had taken a more "realistic" approach in considering the Marcos wealth issue—which has dragged on for the last 20 years.

"Our goal is to recover all illicitly amassed that we can legally prove as being ill-gotten," he said, noting that the PCGG had an excellent history of recovering what could get back—one with Swiss's high-priced attorneys.

The PCGG commissioners have vowed to focus on the recovery of the Marcos assets, after the Supreme Court rejected the motion for reconsideration filed by the Solicitor General questioning the decision of the anti-graft body to settle the case.

Commissioner Ricardo Abcede drew fire for partying with Imelda on his birthday, which he defended by saying it was part of his strategy to come up with a deal on the ill-gotten Marcos wealth, which has been estimated to be as much as $10 billion.

Commissioner Glenda Atienza drew flak

Cut SLEx toll rates, too, GMA urged

TOLL RATES AT THE South Luzon Expressway (SLEx) and the Skyway should also be cut.

Sen. Ralph Recto, chair of the Senate committee on ways and means, said the same conditions that enabled the government to slash the toll rates at the North Luzon Expressway by 15 percent also obtained at the South Luzon tollways.

"The people would welcome a respite from the sky-high toll of the skyway," Recto said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo, who announced the toll reduction of the NLEx, said the energy problem—most of the peso used pays for oil imports—is the dollar-denominated loans from the Asian Development Bank, which is one of the SLEx financiers.

"Lower tolls should not end at the Balintawak exit. It should extend all the way to Calamba or at least Alabang," Recto said.

He said Mr. Arroyo should order a feasibility study on reducing the SLEx and Skyway tolls without jeopardizing the revenue flow for road maintenance and safety. Judith Lubag-Javellana

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Erap appeals docu but still won't recognize GMA

By Norman Bordadora

WITH THE SIZE OF the latest controversy on ex-President Joseph Estrada now in the hands of Malacañang, one of the deposed leader's lawyers yesterday said the Estrada camp's appeal was "in no way a renegation of Erap's position through the process" of filing the appeal before the Office of the President.

The Movie and Television Review and Classification Board gave the documentary on Estrada, "Ang Mahabang Biyahe ni Erap," an "X" rating. The board ordered that the film was "disapproved for showing on television" because it tended to "threaten the political stability of the state, undermine the faith and confidence of the people in the government. [for] its baseless or defamatory and unsubstantiated statements that are subjective in nature."

In a move early in the day, Estrada's allies were also at the Palace to push for the showing of the documentary on television.

"If I were the MTRCB chair, I would have not banned it," said movie producer and former MTRCB chair Armida Siguion-Reyna.

Former senator Francisco Tatad said the Philippians Inc. He argued that there was nothing seditious about the documentary on the former leader.

Estrada's allies were also at the Palace to push for the showing of the documentary on television.

"If I were the MTRCB chair, I would have not banned it," said movie producer and former MTRCB chair Armida Siguion-Reyna.

Former senator Francisco Tatad said the film produced by

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Saguisag twits Solicitor General on people's initiative about-face

By Norman Bordadora

SIDE BEFORE STEPPED INTO THE Supreme Court, where he will argue on Tuesday against a people's initiative in a manner of changing the Constitution, former Sen. Rene Saguisag yesterday fired an early broadside at one of the initiative's defenders.

Saguisag said that Solicitor General Alfredo Benipayo had, in fact, filed two bills proposing an enabling law for people's initiative. This means that he did not think there was an enabling law," Saguisag said at the Kapihan sa Sulo forum yesterday.

"He filed the bills to fill the gap... It will be interesting to see on Tuesday how he would settle around this fact," he said.

Macliara can do it

Saguisag said he was sure Macliara, 10 fellow drafters of Sen. Sotto Ejército, would be able to explain his current position on the constitutionality of the initiative process as a means to change the Constitution.

"Let's just see how he'll do it," Saguisag said.

Saguisag lionized the people's initiative provision filed by Sigrid Bernas and the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines with the SC as "always with political strife" being pinned on the Filipino people.

43% for Cha-cha

A research group, the Center for Leisure and Advocacy, said it had found out in a survey from Sept. 6 to 13 that 43 percent of Filipinos never support the people's initiative seeking a shift to a parliamentary system.

"The fact that many of the respondents who are in favor of Charter change also now favor the people's initiative is notable (because) they now see the process as a medium through which they can participate in a historical political exercise," said Ed Maliday, executive director of the center.

Nothing to do with FVR

Maliday is undecided and researches the former President Fidel Ramos...said for business relationship with Ramos had nothing to do with the results of the survey.

Ramos is a Cha-cha backer.

Maliday said the center's survey was conducted nationwide with 1,200 respondents, and had a margin of error of plus or minus 2.5 points.

NEW AMERICANS
Hundreds of foreigners, including Filipinos, take their oath of allegiance to the United States as new citizens in a naturalization ceremony in Los Angeles Friday. They were among the 400,000 in the Los Angeles area to become American citizens this year. Among those in Philippine fatigues is US Marine Sgt. Jose de Vera (foreground), who took the oath after returning from duty in Iraq. Filipinos were the second biggest group of foreigners to acquire US citizenship this year. AFP/FILE

Senate asks SC to junk . . .

By Inquirer staff

"A glaring defect of the proposal for a people's initiative in the absence of an enabling law to govern the process is fraught with many dangers that need to subvert, rather than find a sufficient avenue for the expression of the true will of the people," the Senate said.

"The alleged initiative has been manipulated by the administration," it added.

A people's initiative is one of two modes underlining introduced by Mr. arroyo's allies to keep her in power at least up to 2010 and mid-s reforms of government that has been in place for decades.

The other effort involves transforming Congress into a constituent assembly that would propose Charter amendments.

The Senate filed its 29-page "opposition in intervention" before the noon on Friday, according to Senate legal counsel David Jonathan Sta., who signed the petition along with Senate counsel-on-record Porfirio Aquino.

Sen. Edgar Arroyo is to argue the Senate position along with Aquino and Sta.

The high court has the final say on whether the controversial initiative will succeed or not. Its supporters deem the initiative is backed by 6.3 million signatures but its opponents say many of the signatures were collected under false pretenses or in exchange for cash and "goodies."

In March, Bryce Arjonel Bitay and some of those who supposedly signed the initiative were people long dead.

The Senate said the people's initiative petition was crippled by the absence of an enabling law from Congress to allow scientific safeguards to prevent fraud, manipulation, anomalies and the risks of flights to foreign destinations.

The Senate also pointed out that the petition actually sought a revision or rewriting of the entire Constitution, which is not within the scope of a people's initiative.

'Confusion and anarchy'

It cited the move of the Department of Interior and Local Government to gather signatures for the initiative through barangay assemblies, and the visits of Arroyo to have publicized millions of signatures.

"Resistance by the Constitution means that its first principles should not be stifled with ready, that the fundamental principles of the Constitution are contemplated if such principles is breached by manipulated 'consent,'" the Senate said.

"Nothing but confusion and anarchy can ensue from the abandonment of the first principles of the Constitution," it said.

The Senate said among the deficiencies of pushing for a people's initiative was the lack of a systematic forum where the proposed amendments could be freely debated.

Sta. and Aquino went to the Supreme Court after the Commission on Elections dismissed its petition on Aug. 31.

Comelec reasons

The pro-Charter change groups had asked the Comelec to authorize the fulfillment of signatures they said they had gathered petitioning for a shift from the bicameral-presidential to the unicameral-parliamentary system of government and to submit a plebiscite on three changes.

The Senate cited the reasons the Comelec gave when it denied the Bgnia and Usap petition.

The Comelec noted that it had no authority to take cognizance of any petition for a people's initiative until a law had been passed by Congress implementing the people's initiative system.

The Comelec said the petitioners' attempt to circumvent the so-called "Santiago guidelines" had no legal basis and that the proposed constitutional changes involved a revision of the Constitution rather than mere amendments.

Voice of God

Such a revision "cannot be achieved through a people's initiative," the Comelec said.

The Senate said Enjrie and Usap had gone to great lengths to evade the scope of the court's ruling in 2005 calling on a similar people's initiative after Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago filed a case against it.

Enjrie and Usap used arguments that ranged from the "sublime to the ridiculous," the Senate said.

"First, they invoke the voice of the people and the voice of God. It is argued that the use of interpreting RA 6735 (system of referendum and petition initiative) is to give due respect and recognition to the voice of the people, the voice of God. This is taking the name of God in vain," the Senate said.

It stressed there were legal issues that could not be decided by a head count.

Proposed provisions

The Senate said the shift to a parliamentary government "cannot be categorized, even by numerical superiority, as unconditional."

"Rather, there are, by any measure, revisions as defined by the framers of the Constitution."

In its proposition, the Enjrie-Usap petition asked: "Do you approve the amendments of Articles VI and VII of the 1987 Constitution, changing the form of government from the presidential system presently existing to a parliamentary system, and providing for Article XVI as transitory provisions for the orderly shift from one system to the other?"

The proposed system of government would be headed by a prime minister elected by members of the parliament, with a president as head of state.

Signature questions

A proposed transitory provision provides what senators see as restrictions to incumbent legislators.

It says that until the election of a regular parliament, there shall be no interim parliament that would be composed of "the incumbent members of the Senate and the House of Representatives, and the incumbent members of the Cabinet who are heads of executive departments."

The provision that Mr Arroyo and Ilo Cayetano shall serve until the expiration of their terms on June 2010, "unless superseded by a vote of two-thirds of all the members of the interim parliament."

Generals lose Jusmag

By Inquirer staff

(JUL 8c. 13504 "void," the tribunal ordered the Register of Deeds of Pasay to cancel the title and the disputed area to the Philippine Army of the Bonifacio Military Reservation."

Attorney Antonio Angelito Sandoval Gutierrez, Rinalo Grimm and Adolfo Alcuaz conferred with the decision. Associate Justice Reynato Puno, then of the second division, did not take part in the deliberations because he had once "with" the area since in the case.

P3B per sqm

The members of AFAI, a non-stock corporation organized mainly by wives of military officers, had claimed to have secured a title for the property from the Register of Deeds.

They claimed to have bought the land for P11,397,686.—or P50 per square meter—with Abelardo S. Fabul Jr., director of the Lands Management Bureau (LMB), affixing his signature to the deed of sale.

When the Department of Justice—which was then investigating land claims of the Fort Bonifacio Military Reservation—learned about the matter, it ordered the National Bureau of Investigation to conduct a probe.

The NBI later ruled that Fabul's signature had been forged.

In 2005, the Office of the Solicitor General filed a suit for Republic Real Estate Corporation, stating that the SEAG title be nullified and canceled.

It cited Fabul's forged signature, the transaction's not having been recorded in LMB records, the lack of proof of payment for the land, and the fact that the property in question was "inalienable, being part of a military reservation."

Despite the fact that Fabul himself had declared during the deed of sale during the hearing at the Reg RTC, claiming that his signature was forged, the lower court still ruled in favor of SEAG.

It ruled that the land was no longer part of the Fort Bonifacio Military Reservation.

'Void ab initio'

The Office of the Solicitor General reviewed the case to the Court of Appeals, and later to the Supreme Court.

In its ruling, the high court sided with the OSG.

According to the high court, a military reservation such as the one in Fort Bonifacio "is not open to private appropriation or disposition and, therefore, any certificate, and/or it is the land of the public domain" and declared disposable and alienable public land."

It noted that SEAG—throughout all the legal proceedings—had "not cited any presidential, or legislative act to that effect, segregating the property ... from the reservation and declaring the same as alienable and disposable land of the public domain."

Thus, it said, the title was "necessarily void ab initio [from the start]."

The high court noted that no less than former MAG president Virginia Aquino had admitted several times that a Reginaldo Bello had served as a "facilitator" in the transactions of the corporation with the LMB and the Registry of Deeds.

And despite SEAG's "sound intention" to present Bello in court...it never did so.

WHAT WENT BEFORE

ONE OF THE ISSUES RAISED BY the unsuccessful mutiny in 2003 involved retired officers contributing to quarters reserved for active officers.

The mutiny at Fort Bonifacio (dubbed on May 27, when 1,200 rebelling troops from the Navy regulars) some 60 retired generals and flag officers who had investigated at the Bonifacio Naval Station (BNS).

The housing units were intended for active-duty personnel, but the retired generals had laid claim to the BNS based on Presidential Decree No. 881 issued by then President Ferdinand Marcos that declared parts of the Fort Bonifacio Military Reservation for military housing.

Former Sec. Article of this proclamation that the Bonifacio Officers Village Association Inc. (BOAI) was able to acquire a land title to the BNS officers' quarters in 1998. In 1999, Bonifacio secured an injunction from the Court of Appeals against their eviction.

The ruling recommended that the Bonifacio be evicted, but the Pasig Regional Trial Court ordered the document, prompting the military to lodge an appeal.

On June 2, another batch of 115 retired Navy and Marine officers were ordered to vacate the BNS after the Supreme Court.

They were followed by the eviction of 44 retired and non-living officers from the Active Officers' Quarters on June 13.

On Aug. 2, a 1,000-member revolving door from the Army, Navy, Marines, retired military and police officers' living in the Joint United States Military Assistance Group Quarters housing compound, another night disrupted property.

The series of officers' brought the housing compound back to partial a group called the Coalition Homeowners Association Inc. (CHAI), which then domestic have enrolled there yearly for P11,000 fees in 1991.

But the government, through the Department of Environment Development Authority, said that the property was valued at P7.2 billion, and soon been declared for sale, and that 10 BCI's disputed cases involved the occupants.

The group of the Galapad residences prompted the Palafox Commission, which conducted an inquiry into their complaints, to recommend the recovery of the housing properties. —Jodi Lawrence de Guzman, Inquirer Research

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RP needs trade czar with Cabinet rank, says solon

By Philip Tubeza

PETE'S HAVE CLUB: Abraham, the Philippines should have a special office dedicated entirely to looking after the country's international trade policy and trading relations, said a top Senate leader.

Canadian Sen. Rep. Luis Villafuerte urged the government to create an office of Chief Trade Negotiator, with Cabinet rank, as trade issues were for too important to be left to "ad hoc negotiators."

"It has become absolutely imperative for us to invest in a permanent office that would concentrate solely on building up our trade negotiations and resolving [trade] disagreements with each country," Villafuerte said.

"We should appropriately use trade policy as purposely open new foreign markets for our products and services, and to create new opportunities for our industries as well as higher living standards for our farmers, fishermen and workers," he said.

Villafuerte said the new office should close up and execute a comprehensive, scientific and results-oriented trade policy in dealing with bilateral, regional and multilateral trade issues.

"Depending on how the issues are resolved, we may end up needlessly jeopardizing thousands to hundreds and possibly thousands of workers out of their jobs," he warned.

Villafuerte said the new office would be patterned after the United States' Office of the US Trade Representative, which is headed by an official with Cabinet rank.

The US trade representative coordinates trade policy, resolves disagreements and frames issues for the White House and serves as the US President's principal trade advisor, negotiator and spokesperson.

"Over the years, the US Trade Representative's office has developed institutional expertise. It even has a chief agricultural negotiator and commodity specialists who haggle and enforce agreements relating to US farm interests and products," Villafuerte said.

Villafuerte, who chairs the House committee on fisheries and aquaculture, has been pushing for greater access of Philippine tuna to world markets.

The Fair Trade Alliance (FTA) group has also hounded the Philippines' lack of preparedness in bargaining on international trade issues.

Gov't hikes surety fund rate

THE EMPLOYEES Compensation Commission has raised the monthly contribution of private sector employers by two percent for employees earning P15,000 or more, Labor Secretary Arturo Brion said yesterday.

Brion, chairman of the ECC board, said the new rate would take effect in January next year and was intended to prevent the depletion of the Employees Compensation Fund (ECF) due to the rising number of compensation claims by workers over the past years.

"The ECB composed of representatives from both private and government sector employers, supports the Employees' Compensation Program (ECP) being implemented by the ECC.

The ECP provides a package of benefits for public and private sector employees and their dependents in the event of work-connected disabilities such as sickness, injury, disability or death.

Under the law, the contributions to the ECF are paid by the employees and remitted to either the Social Security System (for the private sector) and the Government Service Insurance System (for the public sector). The ECC rules on the cases where a claim can be paid on a worker.

At present, a private sector employee remits to the SSS a monthly contribution of P10 per employee regardless of the amount of the employee's monthly salary. The last been particular for the past 21 years.

But Brion stressed that the present rate of P10 per month per employee would still apply to low-salaried employees in private firms earning P14,000 per month or less.

Jerome Aning

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OSAMA BIN LADEN: Dead of typhoid fever?

Bar No. 1 on rape case:

From page A1

Regional Trial Court.

The law firm, Syquia Salazar Hernandez & Gascon, represents Lance Cpl. Keith Silkwood, and she mainly serves as an assistant to Silkwood's lead lawyer, Jose Justiniano.

In an interview yesterday, the outspoken lawyer who started attending the rape hearings only on Sept. 11 admitted to already feeling the heat in the highly charged legal battle.

Just last Friday, she said, one of Nicole's aides, an supporters in the courtroom told her upbraid: "Sayang ka, bakit ka pa naman, of her supervisor pa. Either a woman, you are a woman, too, a her (opposition at that)."

She said members of Task Force Subic Rape, who were then distributing leaflets on the occasion of Nicole's 23rd birthday, were also saying under things but not directly, as well as giving her nagger looks.

Part of the job

"That's already an attack on my person and painful for me as a woman. But as a professional, I take it as part of the job," De Venecia said.

Although she had been working on the case since earlier, De Venecia only began to be visible to reporters through the three-month-old trial, when the defense started its presentation of evidence.

Being an assisting lawyer, she is often seen seated behind Justiniano and helping him sort out documents. She has yet to address the court herself, but obviously relishes just being there.

No. 1

"This is valuable training for first-year lawyer like me. Basically, get down things, bring books," said the rookie, who obtained her law degree from the University of the Philippines but took her undergraduate course at the Ateneo de Manila University.

Like Nicole, she's an Atenean. De Venecia is also an alumna of the Ateneo de Davao.

In the 2008 bar exam results that were announced in March, Joan was at the top of the pioneers' heap with a score of 87.2.

As a student, she was more active in campus politics. (The anti-US group now rallying behind Nicole may be pleasant to hear that, as early as high school, Joan

France ...

From page A1

The Defense Ministry issued the statement after the French regional newspaper L'Est Republicain said Saudi Arabia was convinced Bin Laden had died of typhoid in Pakistan last month.

"The information published this morning in the L'Est Republicain newspaper relating to the supposed death of Osama bin Laden cannot be confirmed," the Defense Ministry said.

"The Defense Minister (Michele Alliot-Marie) has asked that an inquiry be carried out to determine the origin of the leak that can be punished by criminal charges."

"By (Bin Laden's) geographic isolation provoked by constant fleeing is believed to have made medical assistance impossible (and) on Sept. 4, 2008, the Saudi security services received preliminary information of his death," said the report.

A US intelligence official told Reuters the report should be treated with caution and a senior Pakistan government official said he himself had not received any information from any foreign government that would corroborate the story.

The Saudi Arabian Interior Ministry spokesperson was not available for comment and a Western diplomat in Riyadh and the Islamic community had no such information.

"If anyone was in the picture, I doubt it would be Saudi intelligence. Even if Saudi service had information, they'd pass it on to the United States, not France. It doesn't ring true," the diplomat said.

Reliable source

The French newspaper printed what it said was a copy of the report, dated Sept. 21 and said it was passed on to Chirac and Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin on the same day.

"According to a usually reliable source, the Saudi services are now convinced that Osama bin Laden is dead," the document said.

"The information gathered by the Saudis indicates that the head of al-Qaida was a victim while he was in Pakistan on Aug. 23, 2008, of a very serious case of typhoid which led to a partial paralysis of his internal organs."

The report, which was stamped with a "confidential defense" label and the initials of the French secret service, said the Saudis first heard the information on Sept. 4 and thus it was waiting for more details before making an official announcement.

The US intelligence official, who declined to be named, said Bin Laden had long been rumored to be suffering from kidney ailments and is reported to have received dialysis.

"We have believed him to be in declining health for some time and there have been other rumors of his demise."

Its killing

He said Bin Laden had "minimal operational involvement at this time" in al-Qaida.

Saudi-born Bin Laden was based in Afghanistan until the Taliban government there was overthrown by US-backed forces in 2001.

Since then, US and Pakistani officials have regularly said they believe he is hiding somewhere on the rugged border between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

His last released videotaped message was in late 2004, but several low quality audio tapes have been released since.

Senior US intelligence figures have said Bin Laden remained a significant inspirational figure but his death or capture could have a substantial impact in the war on terrorism.

They noted, however, that the death of al-Qaida's leader in Iraq, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, in June, had failed to lead to any letup in the violence there. Reuters, AFP

Many Britons ...

From page A1

The May+ research found that 46 percent would pass on the pension to longevity, although far more women (66 percent) were willing to make the sacrifice than men (23 percent).

However, nearly 60 (59 percent) would not give up their friends or family in order to live to be 100, while half thought scientists should keep trying to prolong people's lifespans.

Private health care provider BUPA, commissioned the survey as part of a debate on the implications of an aging population.

"Britain is facing its aging time bomb with major challenges presented by retirement, the desire to live longer and the increasing burden of caring for older people," said Andrew Balmore-Owen, BUPA's medical director. Reuters

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It's about …

BAR TOPNOTCHER Juan de Venecia, defender of American soldiers accused of Nicole's rape, in her first big case.

'Manila was 'not exactly a fan of US foreign policy, especially its military interventionism.'")

Behind the scenes, Tin Ventecia has mainly done legal research not only for Hillewood but also for his co-accused, Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith.

She once acted as "a private prosecutor" conducting a quick cross-examination of Hillewood in order the US Embassy.

No opinion

She also had a role in preparing the defense panel's expert witness, Dr. Renato Sanchez, for the "expected questions" of the prosecution during cross-examination.

"And no, there has never been an occasion that she discussed the Subic rape case with her uncle 'JDV' Diputado Juan de Venecia].

"I haven't personally met Nicole, and I have no opinion [On] her, and as a woman and a young lawyer, I would be the first to condemn the barbaric act of rape whether the victim—or perpetrator—is a Filipina or of another nationality," she said.

But then, added the young outspoken, "In my personal opinion, our claims are telling the truth."

Filipinos' per capita income to hit past $1,463

From page B-1

SALCEDA

of GDP expansion and slower population growth of below 2 percent were the factors that lifted the economy's per capita income.

Based on the government's economic growth forecast, Salceda said the Philippines would hit a per capita income of $1,463 per Filipino by the end of 2006, based on a GDP of 95.7 trillion, population of 87.4 million and average peso-dollar exchange rate of 52:1.

To adjust for changes in prices, the National Economic and Development Authority calculated its estimate of $1,463 per capita income using constant 1985 prices. Per capita income in 2004 was $1,298 and $1,040 in 2000.

At this rate, Salceda said the Philippines could hit a minimum of $1,899 per capita income by 2010.

Match Thailand's performance

"Our fighting target is a per capita of $2,800 which would put us on a par with Thailand," which had a per capita of $2,490 in 2006, he said.

Matching Thailand's performance was "feasibly stronghold," Salceda said.

Thailand and the Philippines used to be economic equals until Bangkok's economy zoomed in the 1980s while that of the Philippines faltered.

Neri said the surge in per capita income over the past 3 years was even more remarkable considering that the government started from a low base (about $900 per capita during the Estrada administration) and the volatile political situation that has kept the Presidency virtually on the ropes throughout her rule.

Neri said the per capita income should increase faster if the peso-dollar rate stays at the current average of below P52 for the rest of the year.

OFW remittances

Officials noted that if per capita were calculated based on gross national product (GNP)—which includes foreign receipts—the per capita would be even higher because of the unprecedented rise of remittances from overseas Filipino workers in recent years.

GDP measures the total monetary value of all the goods and services produced in a country in a given year, minus receipts from abroad.

But equally important in building per capita income is ensuring that the country's wealth is shared by all, according to Neri.

"This is the reason why the focus of our economic development in the coming years is unclogging the bottlenecks that prevent the economic gains from filtering down to the masses," he said.

The includes higher capital expenditures to build more railways, airports, bridges and agriculture facilities while directing more funds to social services and out through the bureaucratic gridlock through the efficient distribution of subsidized food, medicine and health insurance.

"But as Ned himself noted, the uneven distribution of this national wealth remained a big problem for the government.

"We might have a high per capita income, but whether this is distributed equally is a big question," he said.

While the President has touted the strong peso, low interest rates and the improving fiscal condition as proof of her good economic stewardship, her critics have dismissed these as headline statistics that do not reflect the widespread poverty in the country.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

Editorial

Papal point

POPE BENEDICT XVI HAD INTENDED HIS SIX-DAY visit to his native Germany to be a restful, but meaningful homecoming. Like his great predecessor who had been the first non-Italian in 400 years to become pope and who had made a moving homecoming to his native Poland 15 years after his election as the pope's, in 1978, Benedict, the former Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, had seemed to make his Bavarian visit a symbolic "return of the native," a coed-ification of the roots of his person and for the roots of the faith.

The visit turned out to be too meaningful for comfort, and it was anything but restful. By quoting a 14th-century Byzantine emperor on Islam—"Show me just what Mohammed brought that was new, and there you will find things only evil and inhuman, such as his command to spread by the sword the faith he preached"—during a university address, Benedict has riled Muslims and even some Christians and sparked a global conflagration. Catholic churches and Catholics in Islamic countries have been attacked.

The Pope has said he is "deeply sorry" (some linguists say the English translation should have been "deeply saddened") that Muslims have been offended by the quotation. He clarified that in no way does the quotation reflect his opinions. He has also explained that his university address has been misinterpreted and that he has a "deep respect" for Islam.

In hindsight, the "misinterpretation" seems a "nonconfrontational tactic." The quote from the emperor of Constantinople, Manuel II Paleologus, consists of 32 words out of a text of more than 3,000 words (at least in the English translation of the German original)!

To be sure, the overall text must balance and complement those 32 words, which everyone must be reminded is a quotation that merely served to illustrate a point. And what was the point of the address? It was about the rationality of faith, about the Hellenic or rational influence on Christianity that makes of the religion a marriage of faith and reason. Definitely the hysterical reaction in the Muslim world and some sectors of Christianity is an ironic counterpoint to what the Pope was trying to say in an eminently academic, level-headed, and, yes, rational way.

But was the Pope irresponsible in using the controversial quotation? However incendiary the import of the quotation, the Pope indicated he did not share the opinion of the emperor about the evil and inhumanity of Islam. But he indicated that the quotation fronts the "erudite" emperor should show that rationality plays an essential role in the faith, and this rationality is translated into powerful examination of differences; in short, in dialogue.

That rationality is eminently dialogical and powerful was demonstrated by the fact that the Pope was delivering an address to his old university of Regensburg. In fact, he opened his address to the students and faculty with a fond recollection of those days in the academe when "despite our differences and occasionally serious disputes about the right way of science."

And the dialogical rationality of the faith was also embodied by the Pope's quotation of the emperor that was steeped in the context of the passing with a Persian scholar—and a little later on that!

The Pope, in fact, said that the remark about Islam as "evil and inhuman" was delivered with "startling brusqueness." The severity of the remark thus was merely a dramatic flourish to what the emperor was trying to point out.

"The emperor, after having expressed himself in forthright, gives us an explanation for the reasons why spreading the faith through violence is something unreasonable. Violence is incompatible with the nature of God and the nature of the soul. 'God,' he says, 'is not pleased by blood—and not acting reasonably is contrary to God's nature. Faith is born of the soul, not the body. Whoever would lead someone to faith needs the ability to speak well and to reason properly, without violence and threats.'"

The pre-eminent role in unity of the faith, the Pope says, as to expound, must be transmitted amid a liturgy that has for all senses of faith because of supreme rationality and secularity. He said rational faith is needed in the discussion with the great cultures and religions of the world.

It is the tragedy of our time that a great address that recalls reason and dialogue should be drowned in the clamor and blare of hatred and irrationality.

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Thank you, Semito Alparce

SEPARATE OPINION

Augusto A. Cruz

I HAD NOT NOTICED IT EARLIER (SUBJECT: Semito Alparce) until I made a surprising and delightful discovery. There was no more noise in the skies. The airplanes were still flying above, but they were no longer disturbing us below. It was so different from the many years and tens of thousands of days (and nights) when we were tormented by the air-raid noise caused by the interminable airplanes. They had robbed us of many daytime leisurely mornings, meaningful conversations, detailed. The children's classes, deadened some of the windows and caused many other inconveniences and irritations in the cities we call Sikwelile Pods in Pantabangan City.

As one of the many victims of the chronic problem, I had written against it in this col. umn for as many as 15 times over the years beginning as early as 1998 and as late as last year when I was perhaps getting to be discouraged. I complained to the administrators of President Ramos, Estrada and Macapagal-Arroyo, and specifically to the Air Transportation Office of the Department of Transportation and Communications, but to no avail. Sen. Joey C. Abaroso, who was quite influential during the Ramos years, also helped us but likewise answered only Hell do Grabo, before he became a politician, letter-count our problems against the offending airplanes, especially their adverse effects on the hearing of the children, but the government never heard us.

Reaching to our human patrons, Congressmen Rufus Rodriguez and Eduardo C. Zialcita, from our two representative districts, informed us that they had filed resolutions in the House of Representatives for the investigation of the irresponsible airlines, but nothing came out of their token efforts. In the Upper House, Sen. Loren Legarda even hosted a luncheon meeting between me and the head of the CEO firm, a natural gastronomic thought he could patronize me in the one of his subsidized national luncheons, telling me about his diets, plans, achievements, etc. I just kept quiet and listened. After a while, he, too, had been reduced into silence, and he said: "Oh, Semito! Jesus, how about your Pinoy-ful names to end this—about me."

This happened many years ago, but I still remember that super cultivated and genial person who actually believed that the whole world revolved around him. PAL such people, they are basically insecure, hostile and lonely people.

Pride is a form of stealing. It is stealing what one does not deserve, or taking credit for what one has not worked for. The expression, "stealing the limelight" is a very good analogy of what a proud person does. Whether he knows it or not, limelight, real or imagined, a proud person usually becomes blinded so that he/she cannot see his/her sin of pride.

I am sending you a copy in the "Bible with God in Mourning" by Oct. 7. We will start the walk at 6 a.m. at the Manila City Cathedral, being the three-hour walk (3.3 km), we will have continuous recitation of the Holy Rosary and opportunity for confession. We let us humble ourselves before God and thank Him for our blessings. In humility let us ask Mama Mary to intercede for us, for our families, for our country and for the whole world. All these we do with deep gratitude and with spiritual humility.

October is the month of the Holy Rosary. October is also the month of the apparitions against the non-enforcement of the airplanes or the loud noises and quiet of Sikwelile.

That was how disturbed we were during those many years until, without our expecting it and without our insisting it or less, the noises from the airplanes stopped. I couldn't believe it initially because I had grown so used to the noises that it could not be so disappearance when it had become almost a permanent part of our environment. But there it was, I sensed, there it was not. It had vanished like spooked bubble. Suddenly everything had become silent and placid. Like we were back home in Q.C. or many ago when one of the cherished values of Sikwelile was its tranquility. I could not contain my excitement and eagerness to share it with the rest of our family who were wondering what the good news was all about. But I did not reveal the treasure of my pleasure and incidental hatred for Semito to neither of themselves and his double glad over their discovery.

Now that the initial thrill is gone and replaced with quiet contentment, I think of the many people who thanked me in addition to the many text messages and phone calls with suggestions and assurances to relieve us of our problems. I don't know how our difficulties were finally solved, and by whom...the public officials, private persons sympathizing with our plight, or the airlines themselves that wanted the noises, pollution and environment to spend them. To all of them we in Sikwelile extend our sincere appreciation.

I think especially of my departed friend who was the indefatigable leader in our campaign against the noisy airplanes that he sombrero'd himself up to the last minute he could not longer use his rocks his feet and see at last the success of his splendid compulsion to serve all the residents of Sikwelile. He's such his successor because. Thank you very much, Semito Alparce.

Pride before the fall

MOMENTS

Fr. Jerry M. Orbos, SVD

LHARADA STORY ABOUT THREE KIDS WHO were boasting to each other. The first one said, "My father has called the tallest son." The second said, "That's nothing, my father made person the Richest person here." Not to be outdone, the third kid said, "You know the Devil Son? He's the one he use who killed it!"

In today's Gospel (1Sm. 9, 20-17), Jesus tells His disciples that anyone who wishes to be the first should be the last and the servant of all. Through a little child, He taught them what true greatness is. Through a little child, He reminded them of the virtue of humility.

If only we become more humble to God and to each other once again, then would be more peace in our hearts and in our souls.

"Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall" (Proverbs 16, 18). The downfall of Thailand Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra—is a loud and clear reminder and warning that no one stays at the top forever. People who think they can be so close their way to the top and who think they can stay there by the same manner as earthly monarchs. It's just a matter of time before they fall, and it will be a terrible fall.

Sometimes once deprived by these forms of pride: pride of sinner, pride of knees, and pride of grace. While not true, intellectual people who think they are genetically superior to others. Pride of face deals with arrogance because of attributes connected to one's person. Pride of grace is the mistaken belief that one is more righteous or more spiritual than at last. Aren't we all involved in some form of pride, in one way or another, in how we see and greet each day?

I remember one time in a party, there were the person I was talking with, actually he was talking to me, telling me about his plans, achievements, etc. I just kept quiet and listened. After a while, he, too, had been reduced into silence, and he said: "Oh, Semito! Jesus, how about your Pinoy-ful names to end this—about me."

This happened many years ago, but I still remember that super cultivated and genial person who actually believed that the whole world revolved around him. PAL such people, they are basically insecure, hostile and lonely people.

Perhaps we can recite the rosary using the **Mysteries of the Mission**, namely: (1) The Incarnation; (2) The Epiphany; (3) The Calling of the Twelve; (4) The Washing of the feet; (5) The Mission Sending of the Disciples to the World. Have your meditation on these mission mysteries lead us to a greater love for God's mission, a more generous response to God's missionary calling and a closer bond with all missionaries all over the world. For a free copy of "The Mysteries of the Mission" write to: SVD Mission Office, PO Box 1975, 1099 Manila or call (0063) (02) 731-7487; 727-1146; 416-7044.

* * *

He will be launching our book "Candid Missionary" on Oct. 1 at the Christ the King Mission Seminary E. Rodriguez Boulevard, Quezon City, with a Mass at 4:30 p.m. This book is a collection of some stories of missionaries I have read, heard, or experienced through the years. God often speaks to us in very simple, ordinary, candid moments. If we are open and humble, we can connect with God in various moments of our lives. Please consider this book as a gift this Christmas to help spread God's Word, and to help our Filipino missionaries everywhere.

* * *

Allotting a few minutes every day to reflect on our daily activities enlightens our mind. Text "ON MOMENTS" to 2948 for lifelong. Sun or 3946 for Smart or receive moments of reflection on your mobile phone. God bless you. Maraming Salamat po!

* * *

PM. Invites you to a day forum on "Caring for Yourself While Caring for Others," on Sept. 30, 2006, 8 a.m. to 12 noon at Ateneo Hall, Christ the King Seminary, 1101 E. Rodriguez, Jr. Boulevard, Quezon City. For inquiries call 37322663 or 09178247636.

* * *

A moment with the Lord.
Lord, create in me fresh hearts, and renew in me a steadfast spirit. Amen.

Don't cry for Thailand

REVEILLE

Ramon J. Farolan

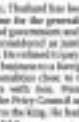
AT LEAST TWO SONS, TEN SON-IN-LAW OFFICERS who graduated from the Philippine Military Academy are reported to have planned key roles in the recent coup which installed military commander-in-chief Gen. Sonthi Boonyaratlin as head of a military junta now ruling the country. Gen. Tan Sonpisit Duongsabol is a member of PMA Class 1976, father of his classmates are PMP Chief Supt. Jul E. Gobien who finished as the top of his class and Lt. Col. Ruben Rafael Jr., the top 3, currently chief of staff of the Philippine Army Tanunggoda son-in-law of the graduation orator of mirth.

The other officer is Maj. Gen. Thawip P. Netniyom who graduated No. 3 in the Class of 1985. He also garnered special awards for excellence in mathematics, Physical Sciences and Engineering. The No. 2 graduate was a Singaporean, Chung Yi Chew, while the first captain ("Tawon") was Catalino Cuy, now a senior superintendent with the PNP.

Perhaps, our local coup plotters should take more than a passing interest in the Thailand coup. This is the 17th in the history of Thailand and most if not all were successful. They would be reminded that secrecy and discipline are necessary ingredients for a coup to succeed. Another lesson would have to do with timing. Thailand is everybody's the best time is when the head of state is out of town.

Actually, the coup reminded me of some wonderful years spent in Bangkok. The city was chilled all those months and much of local travel was done on sentimy (yellow wheeled motorcycle taxi) or tuk-tuk (three wheeled motorcycle taxi). The favorite watering place of Filipinos after Sunday Mass was Little Home Bakery owned and operated by a Filipina married to a Thai, Nunnetta Hirunpinkul.

The government then was actually a family affair. The prime minister was Field Marshall Thanom Kittikachorn, while the deputy premier and army commander was his son-in-law, Gen. Praphas Charusathien. Thanom's son, Col. Narong Kittikachorn, was married to a daughter of Praphas.



REVEILLE

Ramon J. Farolan

For the last 15 years, Thailand has been under civilian rule. It is now time for the generals to take their turn at the helm of government and Thailand provided what some considered as justification for a military takeover. Its vibrant 65-year years on the sale of its tobacco business to a foreign enterprise clashed with personalities close to the royal family, leading clients with ties. Prem Tinsulanonda, the head of the Privy Council and possibly the closest adviser to the king, he had to go.

* * *

This week, Thailand's megaproject Suvarnabhumi Airport located in Samut Prakan province, 30 kilometers east of Bangkok. It is an accomplishment that boasts the world's largest control tower and Asia's largest passenger terminal. Ground-breaking for this airport project started in September 2000 and exactly six years to the month, the new facility will be formally opened, setting a speed record for airport construction. Built at a cost of $4.1 billion, its initial annual passenger capacity is 45 million, with cargo capacity at 3 mil. Everyone, Suvarnabhumi, the name chosen by King Bhumibol, refers to a kingdom golden land, situated in the of Thailand, Cambodia, Laos and Burma.

Contrast this with our own Ninoy Aquino International Airport after Ninoy Aquino. Nothing much has changed since this. When Ramos took over in June 1992, there was great hope that his administration would appreciate the importance of having an international airport (2nd sized) stand up to the best in the region.

During the FVR years, I made the following observation: The great mystery of the Ramos years (now) is that it was able to fix the power shortage but cannot set up a world class airport.

When the election was interpreted as Vice Presidentiary President Gloria called up, inviting me for a briefing on administration plans for setting up not one but two world class airports. He informed me that Clark would become the "premier" international airport, while Nasa 2, a new passenger terminal adjacent to Villamor Airbase, would be constructed to handle a reduced level of international traffic. Nasa 2 would have a capacity of 6 million passengers a year instead of the original target of 10 million. The facility was expected to be completed in time for the centennial celebration of Philippine Independence in 1998, a few weeks before the end of former" six year term.

After listening to Cal, I had that sinking feeling that are some in for more disappointments. For one thing, I was always opposed to another facility for Nasa 2 when NAIA 3 was already on the table. The area was terribly congested, with residential communities all over the place. Traffic was already bad and the runways were short and narrow. The more prudent move would be to relocate outside of Metro Manila.

As it is now, the FVR project landed on the table of President Joseph Estrada and was handed by all sorts of legal and financial controversies. Today, I don't think we have seen the end of these difficulties.

After the change in operation of Suvarnabhumi Airport, Thailand continues to expand much towards greater global competitiveness. Its sound, we have been left behind. Whatever is the news coming from Bangkok these days, there is no reason to think tears for Thailand.

Vote-buying or popularity?

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

NO, THIS IS NOT A POLITICAL COLUMN.

Because so many other things were happening in my life, I missed the unreal final round of "Philippine Idol," where the choice of the public in the elimination round were trimmed down to 14, then further whittled down to the final eight.

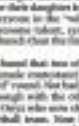
Last weekend, I had the chance to catch up with the competition through the "wild card" segment, and was impressed by the performances of all while the five winners—two men and two women—were announced Sunday night.

I'd been heading a lot about how the first eight finalists were to be selected, but have since lost all interest in the judges. "Papa" Mo (* Cayabyab, Pilita Corrales and Pops's Magsimou—weren't too impressed with ended up booting some of the judges' favorites. Most reluctant was 18 year-old Jessa Zaragoza, who cried when she was told that "final eight" had outmaneuvered herself with a botched rendition of "Bridges," sang Jose Lacaba's Filipino adaptation, and still ended up shedding untold more qualified aspirants.

I'm not sure how much the text-in votes underwriting had contributed to the finalist (he not) through talent or charisma but by "buying" enough text load for their supporters. Winnie Monsod, listening to our animated discussion (Bob and I were guests in her home), had said that it might be impossible for the voters to be manipulated in such a manner, "because the market is still small." Certainly a credible position, especially given ABC 5's humble ratings. The difference with "American Idol," said Winnie, is that the latter's ratings are constant to unduly influences the outcome because there are "millions" of voters, and it would be incongruent to be "buying" votes.

PERHAPS it was Bob's premise, and a desire to test his contention, that led me to make sure that I was home early enough Saturday night to watch "Philippine Idol" so I could cast my vote.

I'd also heard about the lengths to which supporters of the judges and contestants would go to make their "idols" enter the final round. My daughter, a UP student, told me about a text campaign urging support for fellow idolar



AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

rians, "Idolar ng Bayan, gawing Idol ng Bayan." Her group texted Jessa Zaragoza. Their preferment Jessa Adlaran and Dennis Marasigan likewise launched an e-mail campaign for their daughter Jen.

I must admit that everyone in the "wild card" contest displayed awesome talent, each only a far more impressive bunch than the finalists of "Bb."

Sunday evening, I hunted that one of my Top Four (a male and a female contestant) made it through the "wild card" round. She had, (Alas), since I was happy enough with the other two, though I felt sorry for Onyx who won chance the late of the UP basketball team. Since Onyx was neither a crowd favorite or genuine popularity will carry the day for the first Philippine Idol!

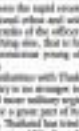
* * *

FRANCO, the problem had never occurred to me that one could manipulate the text-in with either or both. Into the weight of a man? But unless a drug queen wants to walk around in ugly bargain, she has no choice but to squeeze large bill and heavy build into fragile pumps, with heels breaking constantly under the effort of carrying a load three women's designs alike.

"Kinky Boots," the new British movie along the lines of "Calendar Girls" and "The Full Monty," combines as many cut-backed elements only possibly found in British movies, but with added quirky touch of its own. Three of the comedies but failing barely earned those factory whose convictions comes along give to keep alive despite his own lack of interest in the trade. Then there's the proverbial town of no-hoper, once the center of the local textile industry but quickly falling to shuttered factories are surrounded into condominiums.

There's Charlie Price, the heir to the shoe facto-

The Thai coup



PUBLIC LIVES

Randy David

ner month of this has been the rapid erosion of the organization's professional ethos and widespread demoralization in the ranks of the officer corps. It is this, more than anything else, that is fueling resistance among the restless young officers in the field to the Oplan Yakka.

This is where any similarities with Thailand end. This neighboring country is no stranger to military intervention. It has had more military regimes than civilian governments for a great part of its modern history. But since 1991, Thailand has tried to make democracy work in its own fashion. Over the last 15 years, the generals have opted to stay in the background, quietly issuing orders from on-line authority even when they disagreed with the latter. A case in point was when Thaksin ordered the deployment of thousands of troops to the Muslim provinces in southern Thailand to launch an all-out campaign against the Islamic separatists. Gen. Sonthi Boonyaratlin, the active commander who led the recent coup (and who happens to be Muslim), reminded the use of dialogue instead. But, on being given the orders, he did not resign his position as Army chief, but complied with Thaksin's aggressive policy against the insurgents.

It appears that Thai democracy was unprepared for the new breed of politicians that Thaksin represents—flamboyant, manipulative and unscrupulous. Thaksin used the skills honed in the business world to emerge his power base and to entrench himself politically by exploiting the weaknesses of the existing constitutional system. He captured the electoral commissions by filling it with his own people. He banded the weakness of small parties to create a political machine that could win an electoral majority in the House of Representatives. He used the media, which he owned, to control public opinion. He bought the votes of the poor by instituting populist programs that addressed their most pressing needs. He silenced his critics by using libel laws and other legal means to harass them. He even used the military to spy on his political opponents.

Thaksin's tactics have enabled him to win not one but two successive elections. But in the process, he has also succeeded in polarizing the country. His supporters, who are mostly from the rural areas, see him as a champion of the poor. His opponents, who are mostly from the urban middle class, see him as a threat to democracy. Thaksin's attempt to manipulate the royal succession issue in favor of his son-in-law further deepened the divide between the two camps.

Thaksin's supporters and opponents are now locked in a struggle for the hearts and minds of the people. Both sides are trying to win the support of the military. Thaksin's opponents have been trying to provoke the military into staging a coup. Thaksin, on the other hand, has been trying to prevent the military from doing so. Thaksin's strategy is to keep the military divided and off balance. He has been playing one faction against the other, and rewarding those who remain loyal to him. He has been promoting officers who are sympathetic to him, and sidelining those who are not. He has been appointing his relatives to key positions in the military. He has been doing all these in the hope that he can neutralize the military as a political force.

Thaksin's strategy has worked. He has been able to keep the military divided and off balance. But in the process, he has also succeeded in politicizing the military. He has succeeded in making the military a political force in its own right. He has succeeded in making the military a political force in its own right. He has succeeded in making the military a political force in its own right.

Deadly silence

REBEL WITHOUT A CLUE

Patricia Evangelista

ON THE STAND, MAJ. GEN. JOVITO PALPARAN CORplains, "I just feel as if I am being censored information on matters that are military. I invoke the right to remain silent."

The right to remain silent is a right accorded only to those who are criminally charged, and Red's something one shot who's never cut more than two notches on an entire Red house. Any cop show worth its air time will eventually show a scene of a suspect being shoved screaming into the back of a police car by a grim-faced policeman wearing Ray Miranda. You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can or will be used against you.

In GI-SOAD, the question for habeas corpus in behalf of abducted UP students Sherlyn Cadapan and Karen Empeño, Palparan is not criminally charged. He sits on the stand as a witness. Palparan's defensiveness is a manifestation of his own awareness that there is much that can be used against him—and that there is a reason for him to start screaming while the metaphorical cop shoves him into the back of a police car.

I don't know what I expected when I found out Palparan was finally coming to court—Mike, maybe, or some muscle-bound, steel-eyed monster with gold teeth and fatigued-studded straps. Not the lean, mean-looking man in navy blue pin-striped suit with the hints of his navy blue shirt. There's no blemish on Red. He wears khakis and brown leather shoes; there is a gold band on his finger and a serviceable watch on his wrist. He runs both quietly confident, and clasps his hands on his lap. He could have been sitting in an airport, waiting for his flight to be called, instead of Court of Appeals Courtroom 5.

I'm told that there is a component of the military made up of young, idealistic soldiers, who want Palparan to run for president of the Philippines. His image has long been in the making: he is the vigilante who works in secrecy, the cowboy who tolerates (not) with his own brand of justice. Robin Padilla, Cesar Montano and Christopher de Leon have all played Palparan on the movie circle. He bore gun the gist, a handful of medals and the love of the people. Palparan gets the gist, too—he's surrounded by Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo herself—and now he has the loyal support of his own band of merry men, the same men who fall over their own tangled testimonies in court.

Three people were called to the stand last Wednesday: Palparan, the retired commander of the 7th Infantry Battalion Lt. Col. Rogelio Boac, commander of Task Force Makabo, the Special Operations Team (SOT) designated to fight the insurgency; and Lt. Rhodelfe Samson, member of the SOT and former head of the Mercado detachment in Pagsanjan, Batangas.

Palparan was the first questioned. "General, Sir, is there a war going on between the government and the Communist Party of the Philippines?"

The answer came calmly. "It is a conflict, not a war."

When asked the same question, Boac hesitated over the enemployment and rolled out the words slowly. "If you think so. I agree."

It was Samson's answer, however, that raised the question of whether the military is inept, or has made the fatal mistake of hiring inept lawyers who do not know how to hand these clients on which areas of testimony to be about.

"Do you aware that the government is in conflict with the Communist Party of the Philippines?"

She thought about that for a moment and answered, "Maybe."

Asked to answer with a yes or no, she said, "Yes, we are not fighting the Communist Party of the Philippines."

During his cross-examination, Palparan's camel experience after other witnesses. "I feel as if my constitutional rights are below the army works, school techniques and strategies, and a number of questions are being elicited from me that are irrelevant and need not be known to everyone else."

The right to claim military's confidentiality is not there because the military is above the law. It is there because considering the military's record of human rights violations, the army owes the people. As of today, journalists, human rights advocates and leftist leaders are being killed at a rate of one every two days. As of today, evidence and reports of those who have dared to come forward at the risk of their own lives point to the military as responsible. As of today, there is much doubt about whose military answers to.

Alibis may are complicated, against every wave of law, unjustifiable even in cases of war, conflict or a state of emergency. And because they are complicated, because they are illegal, and because the people responsible have no compunction, the existence of confidentiality cannot work here, unless some other equal pressure emerges to the Filipino people can be established. When Palparan is asked about "techniques and strategies," it is because of the probability that these "techniques and strategies" include abduction, torture and all manner of homicidal.

Palparan claimed that there were groups "posing to be legal and rightist" but who were actually fronts of the state. He was asked whether he could name these groups. Did he mean Bayan Muna? The KMP?

He said he was unsure. When reminded of his statement to the press, he said he "cannot recall."

Boac claimed he could not submit to the court copies of the investigation reports on the abductions of Cadapan and Empeño abductions. He refused, he claimed, was not because he didn't want to help. It's because the reports were verbal and in the form of text messages. Has that even legal? Boc said that, "because we are lacking in communication equipment." They had hand pagers, but also, alas, their one computer in the entire Mercado Task Force had crashed. Could he remember when I recall billions in budget allocations for the military.

Samson, when asked about her knowledge of Special Operations tactics, claimed she was not aware of any manual or guidelines. And she also claimed not to be aware of GMA's "fight against the Left" or the same communist infiltration that the SOT, of which she is a member, is supposed to be combating.

This is not surprising. I'd go out on a limb and call her a liar, but I'm worried that I'd wrong, and that the military does make a policy of employing morons and making them officers. She claims there are no guidelines, no rules, no-or-illicit regulations.

"What do you do," asked the frustrated lawyer, "operate on instinct?"

"Yes, your honor," she said without blinking.

There are the men and women who would arm us in the public of the Philippines. There are the men and women entrusted with "intelligence" so only to protect us from those who would do us harm. There are the people who made an oath to protect the Filipino citizen.

May God protect us from our protectors.

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TALK of the TOWN

Editor Jean V. Sarmiento Jr.

Benedict XVI courts controversy

WE ARE FIGHTING IN FULL THE SPEECH POPE BENEDICT XVI DELIVered at the University of Regensburg in Germany on Sept. 12. The speech, titled "Faith, reason and the university: Memories and reflections," touched off a firestorm of impassioned reaction across the Muslim world because it linked Islam to violence. Al Qaida in Iraq declared a holy war and protesters burned effigies of the Pope.

Muslims were also offended by another part of the speech in which the Pope quoted a scholar's assertion that the Muslim views of God was cast influenced by the Greek inquired philosophical tradition of "rationality."

Amid the furore, the Pope issued a personal apology. He said the quotations from a medieval text he used in the speech "do not in any way express our personal thoughts."

The head of the Vatican council for interfaith dialogue added to "Muslim friends of goodwill" to read the Pope's speech in its entirety before passing judgment.

I GOT SOMETHING DIFFERENT FOR ME TO DO back home to the university and to be able to share with others a few joys as they profess. I was invited to lecture about, after I presented myself at the theological Bethlehem. I began thinking at the University of Rome. That was in 1959, at the dawn of the ecclesiastical crisis upon which there would be a great deal of discussion in the years that followed. The Second Vatican Council had not yet been convoked. In the Catholic world, there were many lively currents with students and professors who were full of hope. Nevertheless, we would meet before and after lectures in the rooms or the teaching staff. There were a lively exchange with historians, philosophers, philologists and naturally, between professors of theological disciplines.

Here I observed, there was a free coexistence, many professors from every faculty appointed before the students of the entire university, making possible a genuine experience of pastoral co-responsibility that can rise, Hegelianly Aufhebt, but transcends such experience, in which reality of the fact does not disappear. Here, in this way, there were made a difficult to communicate with each other, yet made up a whole, working in accordance to the division of labor proper to a healthy organism and sharing responsibility for the right use of reason, thereby becoming a living community.

The community was also very pleased at the way theological disciplines flourished in the University, from the consideration of faith, they were carried out entirely scientific and methodologically in the "realm" of the university's competence, even though they could share the faith which theologians seek to comprehend in greater depth.

One profound sense of coherence within the unity of the various sciences was established even when it was not expressed then; colleagues had said there was something and about was referring a kind of "universal" encyclopedia or something that did not exist. That was in the face of such radical experience in self-awareness and reasonable reconstitute operation of God through the use of reason, and to the use of the various disciplines of the Christian faith that, within the university as scientific tool, respected their specificity.

Byzantine emperor

I was reminded of all this recently when I read the edition by Professor Theodore Khoury (Munich) of part of the dialogue carried out (perhaps in the winter of 1391 in Ankara) by the well-educated Byzantine emperor Manuel II Paleologus and a learned Persian on the subject of Christianity and Islam, and the truth of both. I was personally the emperor's handwritten notes are always also interesting for him. During the siege of Constantinople between 1394 and 1402, another would capture city the emperor returned to this dialogue, perhaps during the winter quarters of 1402 spent in Ankara after the defeat of the Ottoman army by Timur (Tamerlane). I think that the emperor was personally responsible for the dialogue's structure, which explains its coherence even as it uses material from various conversations and different times.

The dialogue ranges widely over the structures of revelation contained in the Old and New Testaments, and leads repeatedly into the image of God and of man, while necessarily returning repeatedly to the relationship between what we have called—three "spaces" of faith: the Old Testament, the New Testament and the qur'an. It is not my intention to discuss in this connection the issues between these. I would like to develop only one point—quite surprisingly, the emperor moves in a similar—which, in the context of the issue of "faith and reason," I found interesting and which can serve as the starting point for my reflections on this topic.

Mohammed

In the seventh dialogue (Seventh Conversation) edited by Professor Khoury, the emperor touches on the theme of the holy war. The emperor must have known that sura 2:256 reads: "There is no compulsion in religion." According to the experts, that is one of the suras of the early period, when Mohammed was still powerless and under threat. Naturally the emperor also knew the regulations, developed later and recorded in the qur'an, concerning holy war. Without addressing in detail this question, which is obviously of great importance, a foundation which leads to an unbridled conflict between religions from the emperor delights and evidently in general, interlocutor briefly but clearly: "God is not pleased by blood—and not acting in accordance with reason is contrary to God's nature. Faith is born of the soul, not the flesh. Whoever would lead someone to faith needs the ability to speak well and to reason properly, without violence and threats. ... To convince a reasonable soul, one does not need a strong arm, or weapons of any kind, or any other means of threatening a person with death ..."

The decisive statement in this argument against violent conversion is that not in accordance with reason is contrary to God's nature. The editor, Theodore Khoury, observes that the emperor was a Byzantine shaped by Greek philosophy, who knew intimately its writings. For him it is obvious that, according to scholarly statements, He will not act contrary to the nature of His intellect. One will not say that this basic Greek conviction was true or completely true. Here Islamic theology would develop a different conception of God's voluntas absoluta. One might also think of the nominalism of late medieval theology, which radically questioned the rational structures of reality that were recognized by the "philosophy" of the Greeks. But a profound harmony between God's way of acting and his way of existing has always been maintained, and it would be impossible for this harmony to be thought to be completely contradicted by God's absolute transcendence. The truth will not be simply revealed in the apparently irrational way of the sura, but it will always be in accordance with the profound reasonableness of God's nature.

Burning bush

At a point in time, this rapprochement had been going on for many years. The translation made of God, revealed itself to Moses in the burning bush, which speaks the word from all other divinities and their many names and simply declares "I am," which expresses the mystery of the one God, who wishes to remain hidden and who yet speaks to Israel, and in this way makes himself known as the one who is truly God. The God who is Logos and therefore reasonableness—this is the decisive thing that is said here under the influence of the Greek spirit and of faith.

In this context, the Old Testament text which was written in Alexandria around 250 B.C. is also important. Here the encounter between the faith and the Greek spirit has already left a lasting mark on a document of practical importance. We can see this encounter in the way in which the word "God" is understood. Israel's faith says that all the gods of the nations are nothing. There is only one God, who is the Lord of all things and history. He alone can say "I am." But when this word is translated into the Greek language, the question arises as to how this statement is to be understood. The Septuagint translates it with the Greek word ὁ ὤν, which means "the one who is." This translation is not merely a philological matter. In the name, God tells us who he is, he points to his nature, to what distinguishes him from all false gods. He is Being itself, unlimited and absolute, and in this sense he is the truth.

Faith and reason

A profound encounter of biblical revelation took place here, an encounter between persons on the level of their understanding and indeed of their faith, and it is of decisive importance for us today. The refusal of Greek faith and, at the same time, the basis of Greek thought and indeed its truth. Manuel II was able to say: He is not "God-logos" in contrast to the God of faith.

In all honesty, we must discover that in the last decades there has been a serious challenge to this encounter. Some theologians are trying to go behind the encounter of biblical faith with Greek thought in order to free the Bible from the Greek influence and to see it in its original purity. This attempt is not necessary, because the process of Hellenization was from the beginning also controlled by the Old Testament itself, which in the New Testament is read and understood in the light of the encounter that has become reality in Christ. Some theologians and philosophers of religion have proposed the idea that the synthesis between faith and Greek reason is no longer binding for us and that we must return to the Bible alone in order to be simply what it is. But this is impossible. Hellenization—the encounter between faith and reason that has developed in the light of the New Testament—is not only from the standpoint of the history of religion, but also from that of world history, an irrevocable fact. We can only enter into the encounter between faith and Greek reason that has taken place once and for all. This is the presupposition for a theology that is part of the universal theology of faith and history and that does not become entangled in particular cultures.

Purified Greek heritage

The thesis that the originally Greek development has been accomplished under the influence of Christianity—a call which has come and been developed in the light of historical experience—is by no means an outdated one. Nevertheless, closely connected to the thesis is the question of the relationship between faith and culture, and also the question of the right way to inculturation. Here there is a great deal of room for discussion, and the dialogue between the Christian faith and the various cultures of the world is urgently needed today.

Inculturation is also a problem later in the universities, it must be observed that from that encounter any concept of a universally theology's study is by "scientific" minded and not evolving. Christianity is a new dimension of its former and that we must not accept it without as a whole in the end the whole reason of faith, finally today as in the beginning, for the specifically human questions which we must pose and destroy the questions posed by religion and which threaten to plunge humanity into crisis.

The editor's thesis is that, in the form of his lectures, what he considers incredible manner of religion, and the objective "objection" because the only subject of what is offered in this way, namely, the Greek and indeed subjects that pertain to an unreasonable and because a simplistic notion of reason. This is a dangerous state of affairs for humanity, as we can see from the disturbing pathologies of religion and reason which necessarily erupt when reason is to reduce to the dimensions of religion and which are known to us from parts of the world. We must therefore attempt to open up a new dialogue with reason.

Cultural pluralism

Before I close this conference in which all this has been leading, I must briefly refer to the third stage of inculturation, which is now in progress in the light of our experience with cultural pluralism. It is not necessary to speak at length about the problems of inculturation which we have today. Church was a predominantly monochromatic which ought not to be. Nevertheless, the unity of faith in the diversity of cultures is also a reality. Inculturation is not a new task for the Church nor a problem of contemporary development. The New Testament was written in Greek and draws on the tradition of the Greek spirit, which had already come to maturity in the Old Testament and Judaism. There are elements in the inculturation of the early Christian church in relation to its immediate environment that are binding for us permanently. Inculturation and the use of human reason as part of the faith itself were an development considered "cultural" and universal.

And yet I want to limit myself to conclusions. The attempts undertaken in recent decades as a critique of modern reason must be taken into account in greater detail than is possible here. Nevertheless, the basic decision must be made in this context. We do not live in a culture in which reason is autonomous, and we are still not in the position to do this, and, as such, a subculture in particular which believes it can exclude reason is not a culture.

The communication between different cultures and religions therefore has a fundamental common ground of reason and its application. While we cannot undertake the step into the future lightly, we can confidently engage in this dialogue between cultures and religions among which these possibilities and resources for reason have not yet come to fruition. We are still in the process of hearing each other out, and in such a way that we can learn from one another and overcome the limitations of our reason.

Liberal theology

The liberal theology of the 19th and 20th centuries attempted to understand anew the premises of inculturation, with which this Christian, or an understanding of reason and its application. While we cannot undertake here the critique of modern reason undertaken by this theology, we must say that, although many of its results remain valuable and reasonable, its basic presupposition and its method—to read the entire New Testament in the light of a single system of thought—is wrong. Historical reason is rightly understood to be open to further developments and to contain within itself elements that require a corrective from other cultures and religions. This dialogue between reason and religion is of decisive importance for the future of humanity: the question of God is today placed in the context of the relationship between reason and religion. Theology, which has its place in the context of this relationship, must not be afraid to take on the risk of reason, which is the task of faith. Theology must not be afraid to take on the risk of reason, which is the task of faith. Theology must not be afraid to take on the risk of reason, which is the task of faith.

Genuine dialogue

Only then do we find ourselves capable of entering into genuine dialogue with cultures and religions, which we need so urgently today. Western reason is today fascinated by the achievements of modern science, and rightly so. Its methods, which make possible knowledge of matter and its laws, are a reflection of the rationality of the creator himself. On the question of the ends and the limits of this method, however, we must also hear the voices of cultures in which reason is a form of discipline and of the human existence, but precisely as rationality, as an attempt to enter into rationality itself.

Kant's critiques

Behind this theology lies the attempt to differentiate reason classically expressed in Kant's "Critiques" but today sometimes limited to positivistic reason. Kant's critiques are an attempt to establish the limits of reason in order to make room for faith, but they are also an attempt to reach reason itself. Finally, in a similar fashion Hermann Cohen—one of the founders of neo-Kantianism—tried to develop a philosophy of religion solely from reason, but in the course of his work he discovered the limits of reason and consequently a way into a religious place with in the rationality.

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On the one hand, a prerequisite for mathematical structures of matter is certainly the correspondence between our reason and the reason that is active in creation, but application of mathematics is based on an act of abstraction: we exclude certain questions about causality and purpose in order to see only certain aspects of reality. On the other hand, these scientific capacity to be applied to our purposes and have only a relative validity. The possibilities of technology also emerge. experimentation can yield ultimate certainty. The complexity of reality can reveal itself only gradually. On the circumstances, each from one side to the other. As strongly positivistic thinking it exists—in

Across the NATION

University head's daughter released

DR. ELDIGARIO Gonzales, Western Mindanao State University president, hugs his daughter, Grace Ellner Gonzales, after she was released to an undisclosed location in Lamitan, Basilan. LEO ALMAGUER/INQUIRER MINDANAO

ISABELA CITY—THE 19-YEAR- OLD DAUGHTER of the president of the Western Mindanao State University (WMSU) was freed by her abductors on Friday night.

Grace Gonzales, a dead-mute daughter of WMSU president Eldigario Gonzales, was abducted outside their residence in Aurora Village in Barangay Guiwan, here on July 24.

"My girl was already freed," Gonzales told the Inquirer yesterday morning.

He admitted giving an undisclosed amount of money to cover for "board and lodging" expenses.

He fetched his daughter in a house owned by Gonzalo Ladjasan, an accountant of the Tipo-Tipo municipal government, in Barangay Tuburan in Isabela City.

Father and daughter cried when they met at around 7:30 a.m. yesterday.

Gonzales said Grace, in sign language, told him: "Daddy I am okay, don't cry."

"I cannot control my emotions seeing my girl," Gonzales said.

Grace, wearing an olive green shirt, a pair of blue jeans and flat shoes, appeared thin and was sporting a short hair. She also suffered minor cuts and bruises in her arms.

"It was because she is our princess. I will forget and forgive everything provided nothing happened to my only girl," Gonzales said.

In sign language, Grace told her father: "I am okay. I am tired but I want to go home."

At base Camp father and daughter were off to the 103rd Army Brigade headquarters in Barangay Tabiawan for a brief rest before proceeding to Zamboanga City for a medical examination.

Gonzales appealed to media to allow them to spend more private time. "This is too much for my girl. If we were traumatized, so-sorrel and suffered while she's in captivity, more so with when my princess had experienced."

"I was informed that she was transferred from one to three hideouts before she was released," by the kidnappers," he said.

Gonzales said would not say who was behind the abduction.

But Brig. Gen. Raymundo Ferrer, former 103rd Army Brigade commander, earlier said the victim was in the hands of an Abu Sayyaf group led by a certain Ajahid based in Sibuyan town.

The father said he would not say who was behind the abduction but regional military spokesperson Maj. Eugenio Ramos said the Abu Sayyaf were the likely suspects. Julie S. Alipala, *Inquirer Mindanao*

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Ermita says GMA prodding prompted negotiations

ERMITA

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

BALAGANAÑANG LED A SUCCESSful rescue of a 19-year-old bishop victim, a daughter of Western Mindanao State University president, from her captors Friday night.

This was reported yesterday by Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, who said Grace Gonzales, a dentists, would meet President Macapagal-Arroyo at the Palace Monday.

Ermita was one of his aides, Armed Forces and Armed Forces Chief Lt. Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, Jr. Gen. Esperon

INQUIRER Mindanao

Understanding fasting and Ramadan

By Ustadz Esmael Ibrahim
Contributor

WITH THE SIGHTING OF THE NEW MOON AT dawn yesterday, the Da'ral Ifta, the "House of Opinion" of the Islamic religious leaders of the country, declared the start of the Filipino Muslims' holy month of Ramadan today.

In the Autocommon Region in Muslim Mindanao, once the new moon is sighted, the Grand Mufti will formally announce over radio the beginning of Ramadan. Fasting, as in the past few years, is widely used as a medium to spread the word.

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar. During Ramadan, until the next moon is sighted 29-30 days later, Muslims with disorders fasting, which means abstaining completely from food, drinks, intimate intercourse, and smoking from the break of the dawn till sunset.

THE MUSLIM community prays in a mosque in Davao City as they prepare for the Ramadan. MARGARENE ANGELES-INQUIRER MINDANAO

Why fast?

But why do Muslims fast and what does Ramadan mean?

Fasting in Ramadan is one of the five pillars upon which the structure of Islam is built. The others are the declaration of one's belief in the Oneness of Allah and in the message of Muhammad, regular attendance to prayers, payment of Zakah, and pilgrimage.

If we consider these five pillars, taking into account the fact that Islam aims to improve the quality of human life, we find that the first of these five pillars is concerned with rethink that influences man's conduct.

The second, which is the prayer, aims at providing a constant reminder to man of his relationship with Allah. The third is a social obligation which reduces the gap between the rich and the poor, while the fifth, i.e. pilgrimage, has a universal aspect which unites the nation of Islam.

Spiritual joy

Ramadan is a very important month for believers. It is a time full of spiritual joy and satisfaction, a time when a good deed is rewarded with more blessings and spiritual relief. Fasting brings happiness and other worldly benefits to believers.

A libation fasting is also the reason by which he displays his love for others to his Creator. Fasting makes all people closer to the feelings of hunger and thirst. In normal circumstances, people with decent income may go from one meal's end to another without experiencing hunger, which is the point many feel every day of his life. Such an experience helps draw the rich nearer to the poor.

Ramadan is also a month of self-restraint and self-training, with the hope that this will last beyond the end of the month. It is because of this that during Ramadan, whether in terms of human limits or circumstances, are carried on after the others will be long lasting.

Moreover, the type of food (including Ramadan) does not have any subjective effects of craving, such as those which are provided or fast-only type diets. Everything that is permissible is taken in moderate quantities.

Timing

The difference between Ramadan fasting and total fasting is the timing of the food. During Ramadan, we basically take lunch and take an early breakfast and do not eat until dusk. Abstinence from water for 10 hours is carried out by inactive bodies; in fact, it causes concentration of all fluids within the body, producing slight dehydration. The body has its own water conservation mechanism, in fact. It has been shown that slight dehydration and water conservation, at least in short life, improve their longevity.

The physiological effects of fasting includes lessening of blood sugar, cholesterol level, and systolic blood pressure. In fact, Ramadan fasting would be an ideal recommendation for the treatment of mild to moderate, stable, non-insulin-dependent diabetes, obesity, and essential hypertension.

In 1994, the First International Congress on "Health and Ramadan" was held in Casablanca. It stated "Incorporation of adherence to the medical ethics of fasting. While improvement in some medical conditions was noted, in a few cases they did [during seriously ill patients' health or their baseline medical condition.

On the other hand, patients who are suffering from diseases, whether diabetes or coronary artery disease, kidney stones, etc., are exempt from fasting and should not be allowed to fast.

Psychological effects

There are psychological effects of fasting as well. There is peace and tranquility for those who fast during the month of Ramadan. Personal benefits it as a substance, and the entire environment.

This psychological improvement could be related to better assimilation of blood glucose during fasting as hypoglycemia often suffering improvement in their symptoms.

There is a beneficial effect of stress present at night. It not only helps with better utilization of food but also to energy output. There are 1.6 extra calories output for each unit of the person. Again, we do not do prayers for exercise, but as old movement of the joints with extra calorie utilization it is better than of exercise.

Similarly, the recitation of the Koran not only produces a calm effect (as mentioned above), but improves the memory.

Fasting during the month of Ramadan is considered mandatory for every Muslim, male or female, who are sensible and physically fit, and are of legal age, the age of puberty and decision, which is usually about 14 years of age.

Exemptions

Those exempted are children below the age of puberty and decision; if they can and want to; those who are too old and feeble; the sick, but they must compensate the fast to a later date and make up for it; a day for a day; those who are traveling, expectant women and women nursing their children, but they must make up for the fast at a different time, a day for a day; and women during the period of menstruation for a maximum of 10 days; or of confinement (a maximum of 40 days).

They are not allowed to fast even if they can and want to. They must postpone the fast till recovery and then make up for it, a day for a day.

As a result of fasting, Muslims develop a unique and balanced personality by stimulating the different dimensions of a person's existence. Moreover, all these benefits, may it be physical, psychological, social and spiritual, come as a blessing of God to the entire humanity because Islam is the religion inherent in mankind's built-in physical movement and spiritual exercise for ensuring the success of Muslim in this life and in the hereafter.

Editor's Note: The author is a member of the Da'ral Ifta, the House of Opinion which renders rulings on what is only allowed in Islam. He is also the managing director of the Muslim Mindanao Halal Certification Board Inc.)

Cop chiefs of 4 towns sacked over 'jueteng'

CAMP CESAR FARIÑAS—The chiefs of police of four towns in Tarlac, Bulacan and Isabela were relieved because the illegal numbers game "jueteng" continued in their areas.

In Central Luzon, Chief Supt. Ismael Rafanan, regional police director, ordered the relief on Friday of Supt. Antonio Penne, police chief of Camiling, Tarlac, and Supt. Jesus Reyes, police chief of Gitnang, Bulacan. They are under going pre-charge investigation in the regional police office.

Relieved illegal gambling operations under the regional police in these towns reinforced the existence of jueteng, Rafanan said.

"The one-strike policy carries on to be in full force in any officer who defies the order to have the game stopped by Sept. 30," he said in explaining the immediate sacking of Penne and Reyes.

In Isabela, Senior Supt. Jude Pilloneo Ignacio, acting provincial police director, relieved Supt. Felix Dayag, chief of the Ilchigan police, and former Supt. Romeo Bacad, chief of the Ambuklao police, after a team from the Philippine National Police's so-called gambling task force and the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group raided suspected jueteng dens in the province last week.

Small fry

Chief Insp. Nemeo de Guzman, CIDG Isabela chief, said they arrested 46 jueteng employees and bet collectors in Aurora, Echague, Benito Soliven and San Agustin towns and in Santiago City.

Chief Supt. Jefferson Soriano, Cagayan Valley police director, said he had ordered provincial police directors in the region to treat the Sept. 30 deadline set by Director General Oscar Calderon, PNP chief, to stop jueteng operations in the country.

The relieved police officials were the first to come under fire in what Calderon called "historic gentlemen" fight against the underworld lottery.

Calderon said the new drive against jueteng was meant to strengthen the small town lottery (STL), which the government introduced to Bilibinty as an attractive and alternative to jueteng.

The Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office has approved the applications of 12 companies to run STL.

Play

Income remains to be the STL and jueteng businessmen said the fresh crackdown was a ploy to force STL former holders, some of them suspected jueteng financiers, to give generous support to one of the 5 percent legal share of the PSCO and 10 percent share of the local governments.

Calderon had denied this in a previous interview. Senior Supt. Eduardo Ermita, Supt. Wilfredo Hilario Jr., Inspector Nicholas Aquino Jr., Inspector Norberto Lucas

PPA WON'T PAY WAGES

Poro port takeover messes up workers

DAGUPAN CITY—WORKERS who were contracted by the Philippine Ports Authority at the Poro Point seaport in La Union have yet to be paid their salaries more than a month after they rendered their services to secure smooth operations at the facility.

The workers were contracted as a result of a violent takeover of the port by government agents amid efforts to execute a 25-year contract to run the port held by Poro Point Industrial Corp. (PPIC), a joint venture firm of the Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) and private firm Bolk Handlers Inc.

While BCDA directors maintain the validity of the contract, Poro Point Management Corp. (PPMC), a BCDA subsidiary that runs the port, said it should be rescinded. PPMC is headed by a relative of Bases Czar Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson who wants the contract rescinded allegedly because it was disadvantageous to the government.

A letter signed by 19 workers, most of them heavy equipment operators and stevedores, was sent to the PPA last week to demand payment for the services they rendered when the PPA ran the seaport from Aug. 6 to 18.

Takeover

The PPA ran the port after the Department of Environment and Natural Resources issued a cease-and-desist order to PPIC to operate this seaport.

The DENR, which cited vast environmental violations and the lack of the environmental compliance certificate, has been stopped by the Court of Appeals from implementing the cease-and-desist order.

Rodito Vidaya, 34, said he worked for a day under the PPA management. He said he was supposed to be paid P220 for his service but the amount has yet to be released.

He said he and his companions had been going to the PPA office to collect their salaries but they were able to talk only to a security guard.

They said the guard could not give them any information about their dues.

Vidaya said to work for PPIC since the company started to operate the port in 1999. But when the PPA took over the port's operations, he had no recourse but to take on the job "because I needed to earn."

Another worker, Nestro Padilla, 36, said he also worked for a day as a forensic handling 23 stevedores.

Daily wage earners

Like Vidaya, he worked for PPIC from which he received at least P200 a daily wage.

At least 2,000 workers from San Fernando City and other towns from La Union and its nearby provinces are dependent on the Poro seaport for livelihood.

Abe Macasi, PPA port services division manager, said the PPA has yet to pay the workers because the agency has still to collect payments from their clients.

"We are still collecting payments from the companies whose ships docked [at the seaport] and whose cargo we loaded or unloaded," Macasi said in a telephone interview.

He said the companies paid the PPIC handling fees but these have not been submitted.

"We have billed them, but they said they are waiting for the refund," he said.

Macasi said he has explained the circumstances to the port workers and "they understood the situation."

"We wanted to pay some of them but they preferred to be paid at the same time," he said.

Dalmedia Subtle Puerbo, Inquirer Northern Luzon

PREPARING FOR MARKET

Fishermen have their fresh catch of fish weighed at the Sta. Ana Wharf before these are sold to public markets in Ilocos City. The wharf is a busy area for fishermen and the source of a big volume of fish supply to the city.

La Union town to ban fish pens for 2 years

ARINGAY, LA UNION—STARTING next month, fish pens which have been found to be sources of pollution will be banned along the Amburayan River for two years.

Mayor Yolanda Ong said the ban on the operation of fish pens in the river was the result of an agreement during a dialogue between representatives of the fishermen's organization (Philippine Inland Fishers, Farmers of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources) and marine councils and members of the town council.

"The ban is necessary to assess the river's natural environment," she said.

Ong said she favored a 2-year ban since local fishermen had earlier sought.

On Sept. 11, some 28 fishermen, including village chiefs in the coastal barangays, staged a rally during a council session and presented a manifesto stating their demands.

They said the use of excessive chemicals and commercial feeds by fish pen owners has polluted the communal fishing grounds and destroyed marine resources.

They said because of pollution, the famous dalagang bukid (milkfish) grown in the Amburayan River has deteriorated in quality, smelling and tasting like rubber ("lasang goma").

The fishermen said most of the fish pens in the river are owned by chairmen and financiers who are not residents of Aringay.

Avelino Cariaga, chair of the fishermen's organization, said fishermen who fish near fish pens have been threatened by caretakers who would fix their guns in the air to drive them away.

He confessed that some fish pens in some of La Union's biggest rivers is expected to be passed next week by the council after consultations with fish pen owners and operators.

At least 175 fish pens, some of which were illegally built, would be removed by the ordinance. Jhed Jan Aullan, Inquirer Northern Luzon

Bulacan town to defy ban on landfills

NORZAGARAY, BULACAN—TWO cement-producing towns will open next month one of the largest sanitary landfills in the country defying a court-and-desist order (CDO) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Ramon Angeles Jr., proponent of Waste Controllers Management, said they would open the 18-hectare landfill in Sitio Tiklad in Barangay San Mateo here to accommodate garbage from Metro Manila, Central and Northern Luzon and Southern Tagalog.

Angeles said they initially spent P82 million for the construction and were expecting foreign-based companies to put up machinery for fifteen in the interest payment.

He said his group and a team of waste management experts would complete the landfill despite the CDO issued on Aug. 16 by the Environment and Management Bureau in Central Luzon.

Lemelyn Claudio, DENR Central Luzon director, issued the CDO after a certain Rene Guevara filed a petition seeking to stop the project due to a land ownership dispute.

Angeles, however, said they would proceed with the project. He said Caritas should settle the land ownership problem with the court.

Only segregated wastes would be accepted in the landfill, Angeles said, adding that they have waste and environment experts from the University of Philippines as project consultants.

Some 700 residents here, including Dumagat natives, will be employed in the landfill's daily operations in November.

The DENR has warned local government units they have charges if they failed to comply with a law that banned the operations of open dump sites. Carmela Reyes, Inquirer General Luzon

Ecija farmers wage war on rats as pests wreak havoc on farms

By Amadeo Roque
Inquirer Central Luzon

SCIENCE CITY OF MUÑOZ—BAF information continues to be a scarce precious for farming communities in Nueva Ecija as rodents multiply but while harvest homes mourn.

"We seem to get very destructive rodents not just potato birds or wasps," said a farmer in one of the 18 town and three cities in Nueva Ecija reported to be affected by the pests.

Besides the proliferation of infestation in their vice lands.

Benilda Santos, provincial agriculturist, cited a recent incident in an eastern town where farmers attacked five hectares of rice crops that were about to be harvested.

Santos said the overnight attack dropped the harvest by 50 percent considerably. He said the farmer harvested an average of only 30 cavans per hectare because of the rat attack.

The Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice) said a female rat could give birth three to four times a year with an average of six to eight offsprings. A pair of rats and their female offspring, it said, can multiply to 512 rats in a year.

> 'A pair of rats and their female offspring... can multiply to 512 rats in a year...'

But farming communities in Nueva Ecija will not allow rodents destroy their hard-earned harvest.

Community drive

In Zaragoza town, barangay officials and a group of farmers in Aide Maloling in Barangay 3(a), Lucia Young thought it was about time to carry out a community-based rat elimination campaign.

Experts from PhilRice, the International Rice Research Center, Inc., provincial agricultural office and municipal agricultural officers join the farmers to boost expertise in crop management.

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Zaragoza officials led by Mayor Teodolfo Collado Jr. launched the drive called "Boot! Boot! Rat! Campaign" at the start of the planting season this year.

An inter-agency team is providing information and technical advice to the farmers. The farmers are also planned what to do to combat the rat problem while the experts support them. It is really a community project," said Bernie Zagada, science research specialist of PhilRice's development communication division.

War room

In the "war room" provided by Sta. Lucia Young barangay captain Milagros Guanzo, reading materials, posters, leaflets and photographs and technical graphs that can be used as weapons in the war against rats are on display. Forums on the behavior, biology and ecology on rats and effective rat management strategies are held in this room.

"The farmers have prepared well in gaining knowledge and skills on stopping the rat infestation when they see signs of destruction on their crops. By then, it's almost late to apply the recommendary control measures," he said.

He said the control measures should be done weeks before seedbed preparation. It is advisable, pertinent to seek the rats in the burrows and clean the surrounding areas where they can continue to feed and breed.

"Many farmers believe that some measures, like putting poison baits, are already enough to control the rats. Others believe that breeding monster lizards in the seedbeds would drive away the rats as the lizards look like big snakes that would devour them," Dugan said.

He said some other control measures applied by farmers that, as certain chemicals can help solve the problem, are ineffective. The use of improvised rat traps, use of flame throwers and burning.

But done individually, they could prove no match against the invasion of rats in the fields, he said.

Those involved in the Zaragoza campaign have recognized that the best way to solve the rat problem is through community-wide action and application of various control and preventive measures.

Trap

The campaign in Sitio Maloling now uses a "community trap barrier system."

This system, which is effective for a one-hectare contiguous area, uses a 138-meter square area where the trap can be placed.

The trap system is composed of a fenced area where bait is placed among automatic rice plants) are placed and the inlet of the fence, where are made up of plastic sheets and bamboo supports, are provided with catchment traps.

The rats captured by the traps are collected daily.

Guanzo said the experience in Sitio Maloling would be used in the different villages in adjacent towns and cities of Nueva Ecija.

He said a task force in each town and city would be formed to provide support for the campaign.

"Community action is what is needed to combat the rat problem. The planning and action must be carried out by farmers and their officials in their areas," he said.

TALK 'N TEXT
Gumagaan ang Life!
ISANG UMAGA...
6:02AM
ASTIG! WAY-I-CALL SITA!
Gaan Talk
P10/3MINS FLAT RATE*
AT LOW AS 1 CENT/SEC LANG
MWAH!!!
LOVE YOU TOO!
TSUP!
AT MWAH MWAH!
TYPHOON NA 'TO!
3:30PM
...NG TEXT MESSAGES!
Gaan Text
ALL TEXT 20 LOAD**
AT LOW AS 10 CENT/SEC TEXT
ANG DAAN NANG TEXT...
AND DAAN PANG KA-TEXT!

11:45PM
KUMUSTA NGAYON ANG MISSION?
KUMUSTA NAMAN ANG SOBRANG DAMI?
E DI KAMIT SAAN KA ABUTAN, AYUS LANG!
Gaan Load
OVER P100,000 LOAD OUTLETS
HOME SWEET HOME!
AND GAAN TALAGA NG PAKIRAMDAM...
KARAGDAG MO PA ANG OVER 32 MILLION SUBSCRIBERS SA NATIONWIDEST NETWORK!
Gumagaan ang Life!
TRIVIA

Aplus METRO

GIMME SHELTER MOVEMENT INC.
Rehab Facility for the Homeless

Homeless people learn to hope in Manila shelter

NGO's mission is to teach the poor that there is life beyond the streets

By Margaux C. Ortiz

LIKE A SCENE OUT OF A REALITY TELEVISION show, 18 people stay inside a special house for 30 days, with the hope of having a better life as soon as they step out into the real world.

But instead of competing for a million bucks, these people—who used to live on the streets...will hopefully learn to embrace a new kind of lifestyle from nurse-turned-rehab facilitator Mon Alonzo.

"The homeless have a different kind of addiction compared to alcoholics and drug dependents," Alonzo told the Inquirer.

He is the founder of the Gimme Shelter Movement Inc., a nongovernment organization that runs a "rehab facility" for people who live on the streets.

Instead of confiscating an illegal substances, as most drug users are prone to do, the homeless are "addicted" to a life on the streets, Alonzo explained.

"Based on psychologist Abraham Maslow's concept of human development, the homeless' lack of basic needs has blocked psychological growth, leading to self-pity and hopelessness," he said.

Because they also lack in self-esteem, they become afraid to apply for jobs and merely wander about on the streets, waiting for "blackmanod" people to give them food.

Untapped potential

Alonzo said he realized the hidden potential of the homeless while working as a young nurse in Metro Manila's poor communities almost two decades ago.

While talking to some people who lived on the streets in Cubao, Mandaluyong, he learned that the dingy environment and atmosphere of hospitalwomen had combined to discourage them from simply living a better life.

"It was then that it hit me: I had to do something to help these people help themselves," Alonzo said.

After years of studying the matter, he finally decided to go to Rizal Park (Luneta) in April 2005 to gather 10 homeless individuals—a couple, two men and a group of women—for his pilot project.

"They looked intimidated at first, saying that they did not know anybody was interested about them," Alonzo recalled.

The group was skeptical at first but eventually agreed to give the project a try. Alonzo decided to use his grandmother's old house at 1869 Ayala Boulevard, Manila as a shelter.

In the games

Interestingly, his grandmother, Amparo Nazal, had allowed five homeless families to live in her house for the last 20 years.

"I guess it runs in the family," Alonzo said with a smile as he recalled his grandmother's efforts. He explained that the five families there were also become part of his project.

For four weeks, Alonzo taught the group drive and motivational techniques that he had culled from his own experiences.

"It was frustrating at first, because the group kept going back to Luneta by force of habit," he said, adding that the homeless facilitators considered the park their "backyard."

At night, he continued a recap of the day's events and asked the group what direction they wanted their lives to take.

Stepping out

"I always reminded them that there was still hope," he added. After a month of improving the group's self-esteem and helping them look for jobs in the yellow pages and classified ads, the homeless individuals finally reminded on their journey outside the shelter.

And what a journey it has been, a satisfied Alonzo said. Some of his protegés became seamstresses and waiters, while others went

Hero's burial for slain Binay man

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE MUNICIPALITY CHIEF OF MAKATI Mayor Jejomar Binay was given a hero's burial yesterday exactly a week after he was shot dead by four men at the Global City in Barangay Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.

Over a thousand people led by Binay and other Makati government officials, attended Pablo Olivet's funeral which began with a morning Mass at the Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine in Barangay Guadalupe Nuevo.

Olivet was given a 21-gun salute before the coffin containing his body was lowered into the ground a few minutes before noon at the Libingan ng mga Bayani in Taguig City.

Remodeled officer

Before becoming Binay's security chief and head of Makati's Business Permits and Licenses Office, Olivet was an army captain who received medals for bravery at the height of the Muslim insurgency in Mindanao in the 1970s.

Supt. Alfred Corpuz, Taguig police chief, meanwhile, said they have yet to complete their investigation of Olivet's slay.

Police had earlier said that his security chief and friend of 15 years was killed due to politics, adding that the incident was part of an assassination plot against him.

Different angles

Media before Olivet's slay, he had reported to the Makati mayor the existence of two groups, "Dah Knee Spider" and "Operation Phoenix," which were allegedly tasked to conduct "special operations" in Makati.

On the other hand, unofficial reports from the military said the killing was due to an alleged dispute over money in the Philippine Olympic Committee-Basketball Inc. (POBC). Olivet was a member of the association.

All these angles are being considered. But police sources are cautioned now to on one angle because there is a lot of resistance on the part of the people who can shed light on the case," Esperon told the Inquirer yesterday by phone.

MetroBriefs

Case closed!

THE DEFENSE of the murder of a journalist in Calbiga City last May has asked a reinvestigation and a motion to dismiss the killing. Chief Supt. Leopoldo Bachoro, Northern Police District director, said the Regional Director — the prosecutor for the killing of radio reporter Allan Encinares — has identified a certain Jimmy Abuan, a resident in Mabini City, as the alleged mastermind. License also part of its map. Roberto Capco, chief of the Special Weapons and Tactics unit in Navotas, as among those who had conspired to kill Encinares. For the actor-slain reporter for the Tabloid Saksi, who covered Mabuhay, was shot dead on May 31 by two men near a gasoline store in Sitio Bagong Barrio Village, Calbiga City. "I have ordered that the PNP Chief be disarmed," Bacoro said. At the same time, however, he promised to push the investigation. The police official has ordered Uzarte's allegation against him.

Nancy C. Carvajal

Civilians fight crime

THE LAS PIÑAS government has tapped 13,000 civilian volunteers to help fight crime in the city. Mayor Imelda Aguilar said the move was aimed at combatting Las Piñas' status as "one of the most peaceful cities" in Metro Manila. The volunteers, to be led by city police chief Supt. Jonathan Amparo, will train undergo basic training in self-defense and such practical matter gathering. They will also be utilized in emergency-rescue operations, he added.

Jovelyn R. Uy

The long green line

SOME 10,000 Girl Scouts yesterday gathered at Bayanihan in Manila to form the "Long Green Line," one of the highlights of the Girl Scout World camporee. This is our step of showing that through these young girls, hope remains for our country," said Mar Roxas, member-in-charge coordinator of Girl Scouts of the Philippines (GSP). With the theme "Girls worldwide say: Discover your potential", yesterday's affair began with a camp walk by participants — who came from different parts of the country — from the LRT 1 station on U.P.-Pilipit Subdivision Park on Roxas Boulevard.

Tina C. Santos

Homeless people learn to hope in Manila shelter

Front page A-11

back to learning in their respective provinces.

He friends soon learned of his project and offered to help him.

"The program that Mon set up is very unique," Gimme Shelter vice president for external affairs Gabriel Iniguez said.

Instead of merely providing a temporary shelter for the homeless with "second-rate," Alonzo's shelter aims for something more, it envisions replanted.

Friends after help

"We volunteered our services when we heard what Mon was trying to do," he said. "In his friends, we know that he was doing it out of the goodness of his heart."

After undergoing character reformation training at the Heal Foundation in Quezon City, Alonzo and his friends went to the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) to have the Gimme Shelter Movement registered.

Last March 8, the organization was recognized by the SEC as a legitimate group.

"We are currently working with the Manila City government to provide us with 10 homeless people for the project," Alonzo said.

"One only requirement is for the homeless individuals to be willing to change their lifestyles," he added.

A schedule to keep

Upon arriving at Alonzo's house, members of the group would be subjected to a strict everyday schedule.

From the moment they wake up at 7 a.m. to "lights out" at 10 p.m., Alonzo said the homeless individuals would undergo "spiritual and psychological reconditioning" through lectures and counseling.

"He will also invite a police officer to speak about the law and why everyone should adhere the rules imposed on society," Alonzo said.

He added, "Through this activity, we want to teach the homeless that the law enforcers are not their enemies but their friends."

On the other hand, another speaker — a priest, lay leader or pastor — would help women and women the individuals' spirituality.

"The homeless also undergo group dynamics to promote camaraderie so that they would help in their eventual reintegration into society," Alonzo said.

House mom

One of the members of the five homeless families who have been living in the shelter, 40-year-old Vilma Corbito, has been designated the group's "house parent."

ALONZO, a former nurse, decided to do something to help homeless people after years of studying their "addiction" to a life on a stream. Here, he shares his experiences with some of the homeless people who had sought shelter in his grandmother's house.

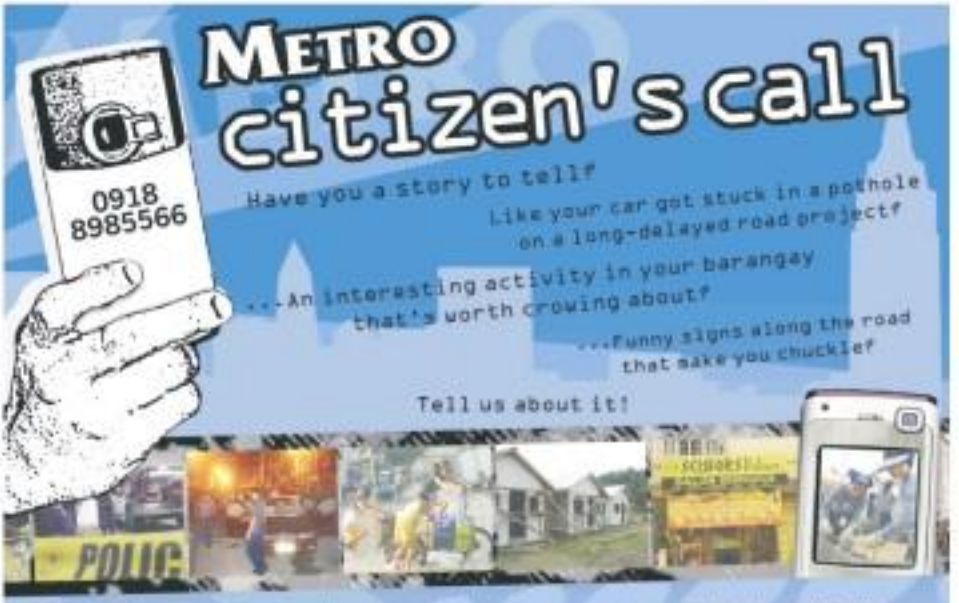
"I supervise the household chores and activities assigned to each individual," Corbito said, adding that more importantly, she also teaches them to love the idea of having a home.

While the individuals are busy with their activities, Gimme Shelter's administrative office looks for jobs and possible education sites for them, based on their psychological assessment.

After a month, the "residents" have a graduation ceremony as another batch is admitted to the center, Alonzo said.

"It will be a continuous process," he said. "Through this process, we want to show everyone how the homeless can become a force to reckon with in helping the country's economy."

(Those who want to help Gimme Shelter Movement's projects can contact Mon Alonzo at 9222853 or email him at thegimmeshelter@yahoo.com.)



PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

GLOBAL Pinoy

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This section is dedicated to Filipinos overseas toiling on land and at sea, in factories, at construction sites and in the homes of the world, and wherever work can be contracted to secure a better life for their families. These are their stories.

They turn a Korean into a Catholic

By Christian V. Esguerra

SEOUL—THE EIGHTH-BIGGEST community of Filipino-Catholics in this quiet industrial Ansan City, southwest of the South Korean capital, has found a new member.

Stella Han, 32, was baptized a Catholic last Aug. 19, ending what she had feared to be a lifelong search for "meaning to life" in South Korea, which has no dominant religion.

On the process, this soft-spoken Ansan girl also helped a second family among some 600 Filipino workers organized into the Ansan Filipino Community.

9-year-old center

Stella is an active member in the community's Galilee Migrant Counseling Center, an office set up nine years ago to assist overseas Filipino workers here by missionary priest, Fr. Eugene Dacoy.

As part of a nonprofessional organization for women supporting the center, she has since been a fixture at the Galilee office. She helps the center's four-person staff deal with the constantly endless number of OFWs in distress in Ansan, from abused Filipinos to wayward workers roaming their wage on rises.

The job allowed her to share a part of herself while nurturing friendships with Filipinos who struck her as deeply religious and hardworking. Still, she knew her work was not complete.

"I had always been searching for meaning in my life," she says in Korean through Dacoy, superior of the Divine Word Missionaries in South Korea, in an interview with the Inquirer.

Stella's conversion to Catholicism, says Dacoy, came as no surprise in South Korea where followers of the 2,000-year-old faith remain a minority. It has only around four million Catholics, but its "conversion" rate is considered the highest in the world.

10 Korean Catholics

On the average every year, a church of around 3,000 parishioners usually has about 50 "adult converts" or those who join Catholicism later in their lives, the priest says.

Stella's journey to the faith was natural, if not inevitable.

First she believed that "people should live their lives to the fullest whatever their religion," Dacoy says he never tried to persuade her to embrace the Catholic faith.

But one new Catholic, of course, is always welcome to the priest whose congregation is the largest and arguably most active missionary order in the world.

Stella grew up belonging to an environment with no organized religion, even if she had always been convinced, she says, of the existence of a higher being, the "Creator of all things." But most her grandmother was Catholic, the successor of a Protestant God or Jesus the Messiah was not exactly alien to her, she says.

THE SHEPHERD AND HIS FLOCK: Fr. Eugene Dacoy, founder of Galilee Migrant Counseling Center, a Church initiative looking after the welfare of some 4,000 overseas Filipino workers in South Korea, and the latest Catholic find, Stella Han. At right, Dacoy with other Filipino believers in front of a Catholic Church in Ansan City.

Two group trips to Fr. Dacoy's hometown in Bohol, then in 2005 and the second one early this year, finally convinced Stella that it was time to formally acknowledge the Creator.

Enchanting Filipino churches

"She was fascinated with the people's deep religiosity and with the way the Filipinos practiced their faith," he recalls.

Dacoy says Stella was particularly captivated by old churches, such as the Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception in Baclayon, the Church of San Pedro in Loboc, and the Tagbilaran Cathedral.

Soon, Stella was taking a six-month, once-a-week catechism to practically a crash course on the paradoxically simple and complex mystery of the Catholic faith.

"Faith is a gift, it's God given," Dacoy says. "Since of the time, it is simple people, like her who are deepest in faith—they just accept it, unlike theologians who ask so many questions."

But Catholicism, of course, is not as simple as attending Sunday Mass or kneeling before the Blessed Sacrament.

"Her stage is very fragile," he says. "She is still at the point where the ideal sees her faith. I could be shaken by an encounter with Catholics who live examples the opposite of their faith."

Baptism of fire

The Filipino community at Ansan's Pitan-gok-dong (Street) would alternately serve as Stella's adopted home and baptism of fire.

Beneath the warm religiosity and sincere camaraderie among equally weary OFWs is, quite understandably, the reality of some dysfunctional Filipino Catholics.

Here, some are true gambling, others its marital infidelity, supposedly as their way of coping in a cash-and-stranger environment.

Despite this, Dacoy says the Church of St. Joseph the Worker in Ansan is almost always filled by a predominantly Filipino flock come Sunday Mass and other religious services.

During Sunday Mass on Sept. 17, there were probably no more than 30 Koreans present, all of them hardly recognizable amid a sea of brown-skinned churchgoers.

Mass in Filipino

The Mass was in Filipino and, quite in contrast to many Masses back home, the gathering was indeed, a celebration. Greetings were warm when it was time to offer peace, singing was joyous, and stories were animated among those who stayed on to attend the Mass.

As his homily, Fr. Noel Ferrer, Galilee center director, reminded his flock on the value of the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the face of a seemingly endless cycle of sin.

"It's not sin that happens over and over again, but the forgiveness of God," he says, calling, in particular, the attention of Filipinos addicted to gambling. "But God wants us to try to sin no more."

Going back to God's embrace doesn't appear to be the problem for OFWs in Ansan.

Same people, same sins

Just a few visit the confession line, setting off the week's sins and desperately seeking absolution and renewal. But then, they would commit the same sins over and over again, Dacoy says.

"Sooner or later, [Stella] will know about these things and will ask many questions," he says. "She will learn about people with a distorted concept of their faith, whose lives seemingly show no harmony between faith and practice."

Dacoy says Stella might even get wind of members of the clergy themselves straying out of their vocation. The possibility, for instance, of a priest siring a child and renouncing to secular life is not always remote.

But many in South Korea, he says, the media generally do not pick up these matters, arguing that "nothing good usually comes out of them." The priest was judging by experience, having been assigned here for the last 17 years.

But what would his response be to one Stella, the young Catholic raised in the country's tenuous and all...sexy sword Catholics?

"What one does not always in harmony with what the Church is preaching or doing," he says. "Good education are common to making somebody an ego-centered with mistakes and his faith itself (as an) end that."

'Tong-its' makes Filipinos play hide-and-seek with Ansan cops

By Christian V. Esguerra

ANSAN CITY—THE SUNNY group of men personally jailed over inside a rundown basement apartment almost every night here is unmistakably Filipino.

They're also known among authorities as the "tong-gak-dong [block] for something else they're loud and unruly some card game sessions called "tong-its." One Korean neighbor even threatened to call the police.

Usually after work, they would quietly assemble in small tables, betting off the day's hard-earned money from factories around Ansan, an industrial city located southwest of Seoul.

For the last four years, "tong-its" has become quite a phenomenon within the Filipino community here. Not once did an overseas Filipino worker lose a month's salary (roughly P50,000) in one card session.

Father, brother, friend

This growing addiction is the latest worry of Fr. Eugene Dacoy, SVD, founder of the Galilee Migrant Counseling Center, a Church initiative looking after the welfare of some 40,000 OFWs around South Korea.

Dacoy, 45, has spent much of his 17 years in the country playing different roles—a spiritual director, career advisor, father, brother, and more importantly, a friend—particularly to around 3,000 OFWs currently based in Ansan.

He's seen the good and the bad about Filipinos in Korea. And he knows the latest gambling craze is no definition of the Filipino character here.

"Gambling is very addictive and many lives have been wasted because of that," he tells the Inquirer in an interview one Sunday.

Stopping gambling

Just two weeks ago, Dacoy dropped by one card game session and told the group to stop. They have moved to another basement apartment.

He saw it as the only way of showing respect. But the feat remained, for continuous to wonder how one can mindlessly gamble his future and dream away.

"I guess it has something to do with our culture of celebration," he says. "As they say, we also are the lowest in terms of a so-called 'culture of savings' in Southeast Asia."

Since coming to Korea in 1988 and establishing the Galilee Center in 1997, Dacoy has kept a balancy between fun and solemn services to Catholic OFWs.

Through the center and the Ansan Filipino Community (AFC), he has been organizing regular cultural programs, sports tournaments, and entrepreneurship seminars to keep them busy.

Next month, for instance, they will host a trip to Everland, South Korea's version of Disneyland, on top of a cultural and arts festival, and a soccer tournament that will pit 4 Filipino soccer contingent against teams from Nigeria, Thailand, and Indonesia.

"We want to keep them focused on things that will really benefit them in the long run," the priest explains.

Last Sept. 17, Dacoy invited a Land Bank of the Philippines official from Cebu Ingat to fly to Ansan to give a one-day seminar on financial management.

Cyclical migration

As he raised the occasion that he personally shopped for food for the participants and personally encouraged his competitors to proceed to the seminar room right after the Sunday's afternoon Mass.

Such seminars are integral to the Galilee Center's "remigration program," which teaches OFWs to save for the rainy days by making wise investments in the Philippines.

"What we want is to break cyclical migration," he says. "It's enough for an OFW to leave once or twice or more a living abroad. Afterward, we hope that they can settle down in the Philippines and be with the families for good."

The process, he says, begins with a "culture of savings and preparation" that needs to be cultivated among happy-go-lucky Filipinos.

The Galilee remigration program has so far formed two groups of OFWs working on separate investments in their home places. The idea is to pool each member's contributions, backed by donations, and later reap revenues in the long term.

Investing in Bohol

The first batch of 25 members raised a $12,500 capital which was later invested as a tiny trading business in Surigao.

A second group composed of at least 30 members is more ambitious. The plan is to come up with P2 million as seed money for the construction of a small resort cum seminar center in Bohol.

The group has already bought a 4,000-square-meter property on Panglao Island among a $37,500 donation from Korean and international organizations working with the Galilee Center.

Dacoy's last biggest dreams for his Ansan folk. In the future when the remigration program gets going, he wants larger groups of OFWs to set up a bank or a department store.

His resolve was gradually galvanized by his deep affection and long interaction with Filipinos who've come and gone and stayed in the community.

To many of them, he is nothing short of a savior, and quite literally someone who always bails them out in times of trouble.

Once at around 2 a.m. a prostitute phone call joined the Dohol from from his room. A drunken companion had been arrested for wandering in the streets at such an unholy hour.

Rescuing an OFW

It helped that Dacoy, by then was already quite fluent in Korean, was known around Ansan. Koreans would call him "sinbuhnim," a term of deep honor for men of the cloth.

At the police precinct, he guaranteed Korean officials that the Filipino worker they had taken was no troublemaker. Good news, they were told, get drunk was sometimes.

Dacoy's credibility around the community also once helped another Pinoy suspected of theft. Police had arrested the man, thinking he had stolen a computer set which had in fact been dumped by some wealthy Koreans in the street.

His innocence convinced police to release the man.

In some cases, Dacoy and his Galilee Center had to shell out money to rescue an OFW in distress.

A 35-year-old factory worker torn a knee ligament while fleeing a raid by immigration officers. His work permit was expired and he had nowhere to go.

The guy spent the next three months in the hospital and somehow managed to work in another factory when he was fit. But then some another raid and this time, he got jailed.

Unknown to the arresting officers, the man's knee did not go through any surgery at the hospital and was still in pain. Dacoy intervened and got the guy released on the condition that he would return to the Philippines right after operation.

Wanted: Good stories

Not this, the Galilee Center posted a $3,000 bond which was forfeited a few weeks ago. The man pleaded to stay in Korea and work since he had no money to bring to his family back home. He promised Dacoy that he would repay the amount in staggered payments.

There's no genuine fulfillment for Dacoy as matter how many times he bails out a compatriot for a charge, he wants stories of OFWs coming the kinds of dedication and sacrifice of a new-ly built home back home.

By then, he knows Filipinos shall have come to value things that are most important to them.

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Quirico

Thaksin family seen protecting his wealth

BANGKOK, THAILAND—THAILAND'S MILITARY rulers will investigate the vast assets of toppled Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra and confiscate those he may have gained from corruption and abuse of power during his nearly six years in office, a high-ranking official said Saturday.

Members of Thaksin's family have stayed behind in Thailand although the former leader remains in London, an official said, amid speculation they want to protect a family fortune that soared in value after the billionaire tycoon ousted politicians took office in early 2001.

"We will investigate his assets and are examining laws to confiscate them and money he gained from corruption and abuse of power. The assets and money he had before he became prime minister will not be touched," said the unit's panel official who demanded anonymity because the investigation has not yet been made public.

The country's ruling military council, which toppled Thaksin Tuesday in a swift, bloodless coup, froze a host of other urgent tasks including investigations of graft in southern Thailand, where a Muslim insurgency has killed more than 1,700 people.

On Saturday, four police officers were injured in the first attack since the army seized power when a bomb exploded along the roadside in Betong province as they prepared security ahead of a visit later in the day by Crown Prince Vajiralongkorn, said police Capt. Thanawat Thongwisanuth.

With Thaksin—some say in Thailand not helping some breakaway ex-Muslim states in spelling the bloody separatist insurgency short—Thaksin's loss dealt politics in the southern zone seen to exacerbating the rebellion. Coup leader and army commander Gen. Sondhi Boonyaratkalin—himself a Muslim—is expected to be more flexible in dealing with the rebels.

A spokesperson for the ruling group said Thaksin's wife Pojaman and two of his children remained in the Thai capital.

"They all have the same right to stay and lead normal lives here. They are living in their own and relatives' houses," Lt. Gen. Bunsaeng-ngam Kerdphol said. The Nation newspaper speculated that Pojaman's decision to leave wielded a powerful influence on her husband, stayed behind to protect some of the family fortune.

Thaksin remains in London with his third child, a daughter.

An official close to Thaksin family said his son Phanthongtae, 25, was still living in the family residence while his wife and the second daughter were at a "safe house" in an air force compound under the protection of Bangkok Pattaya, the former interior minister and one-time bodyguard to Thaksin.

The official, who demanded anonymity because of the sensitivity of the situation, said Pojaman's would remain in Thailand until at least next week when her daughter Pinthongta Chief Executive of Ithinglobal University. AP

WORLDBRIEFS

Baghdad blast kills 31

BAGHDAD—At least 31 people were killed and dozens wounded Saturday when two suicide bombers rammed explosives-laden vehicles into a police station in Baghdad's Shiite stronghold of Sadr, police said. The bomb attack came hours after Sunni Muslims began the fasting month of Ramadan, which US commander Gen. David Petraeus said might see a rise in sectarian violence. At least 14 people were injured in the blast, the officials added. The Islamic fasting month of Ramadan, which begins Sunday for Shiites, has many observers led by a call for tolerance. It was the first time in years. AFP, Reuters

Bush surprised by bomb claim of Musharraf

WASHINGTON—President George W. Bush said Friday he was "taken aback" by a statement by Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf that he had threatened to bomb Pakistan's tribal areas if it did not cooperate in the fight against terrorism after the Sept. 11 attacks. His comments came a day after Musharraf said the US had "only warned me sternly" in an interview to air Sunday on CBS television's "60 Minutes" program. White House spokesman Tony Snow said Bush's intelligence director told the United States would bomb his country if it did not help Washington. He said that Armitage had told him, "Be prepared to go back to the Stone Age." Armitage has disputed the account. Musharraf's statement did not deny the message was a strong one. AP

Farrakhan steps aside

CHICAGO—The controversial leader of the Nation of Islam has stepped aside due to illness, removing the voice of black nationalism from political discourse in the United States. Louis Farrakhan, who took the reins of the religious group which rose to national prominence under Malcolm X, Farrakhan and rights movement, said in a letter to his followers that he is stepping aside due to a genetic disease called myasthenia gravis. Minister Louis Farrakhan, 73, is one of the most influential black leaders in the United States. Although he is rarely far from controversy due to his frequent incendiary comments, he has been credited with uniting the Nation of Islam after the group suffered a split when Farrakhan's predecessor, Elijah Muhammad, died. AFP

25 die in collision of maglev train in Germany

LINGLAKE, NORWAY—A high-speed magnetic levitation train collided with a service vehicle shortly before it was to begin its journey on a test track in northwestern Germany, killing 25 people and wounding 1 others, officials said. The train was on the speed test between Dortmund and Munster when it struck a utility vehicle that was crossing the track, authorities said. The train, carrying at least 29 passengers, slammed into the vehicle at a speed of 200 kph (125 mph), scattering wreckage, including parts and clothing, alongside the elevated track, police said. Authorities did not say if there was a small team near the Dutch border. Besides those killed, 10 people were seriously injured, said Andrea Muller, a spokesperson for the local police. "It's been very difficult for the rescue workers, because the maglev train is a closed fiberglass unit which makes it hard to reach," Muller said. It was the first major accident involving a magnetic levitation or maglev train. The authorities did not offer speculation on the cause, though experts in maglev technology said it appeared to have been a communications breakdown rather than a flaw in the technology. AFP

174,000-stamp

WASHINGTON—A 1930s-era 10-cent stamp celebrating an international postal rate commemorative card in addition by $14,000 yesterday in Washington. The owner of the Beaver Dealers which featured the stamp, would not disclose the identity or location of the buyer of the mint-condition stamp, which bears Lindbergh's President Herbert Hoover. The bid was submitted by telephone Friday, or about $50 cheaper than the highest previous price. The Nonprofit Stamp Collectors Society in Washington, D.C., said the stamp's price jumped between 1930 and 1937, the typical Hoover stamp rose 17 percentage points on all four sides. The stamp sold Friday marketed only 10 dollars on its top sale. AP

JERVY Cruz (middle) will be UST's main man against Ateneo.

Sunday SPORTS

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WHAT'S INSIDE

Europeans on the warpath/A23

Ateneo-UST title tiff on

TIGER CONTRASTING CAMPAIGNS MARK by matters.

For the Atenco Blue Eagles and the Tiger Tamaraw Tigers, the UAAP Finals will likely be an overachievement.

"Our biggest advantage this season has been our size, but that has been pretty much negated by the size of the UST team," said Ateneo coach Norman Black. "They may not have the size of Ildefonso [C. Rabeh] Al Tamsaary, but overall their guards are very big."

The Eagles and the Tigers will square off in Game 1 of the best-of-three series at 4 p.m. today at the Araneta Coliseum.

The series marks the first time Ateneo and UST will meet in the UAAP's championship round. The two schools last battled for the title in the NCAA Finals in 1992. UST then stormed out of the NCAA where the UAAP was formed in 1938 with Ateneo joining the university league in the '80s.

Championship Match Ups
(Araneta Coliseum)
12 noon—UST vs FEU (Alumni Game I)
2 p.m.—Ateneo vs FEU (Alumni Game II)
4 p.m.—Ateneo vs UST (Do-or-Die Game 1)

While the top-ranked Eagles cruised to the Finals, the Tigers battled adversities throughout the season.

"To get into the Finals is more than what we expected," said UST coach Pido Jarencio. "I did not even promise that we'll get in the Final Four. I just wanted the team to improve."

In the semifinal series, the Tigers toppled the second-seeded University of the East Warriors to become the fifth squad in league history to overcome the twice-to-beat advantage.

Perseverance has also marked the Tigers' run in the elimination round where they clinched its third playoff berth despite scrape of illness and injuries to their key players.

"In every game, we're always ready," stated Jarencio. "There's no pressure for us in the Finals, we have nothing to lose."

Indeed, the pressure may weigh more on the Eagles, who ended the eliminations and easily disposed of the Adamson Falcons in the Final Four.

For Black, Ateneo's first victory over UST—a lopsided 114-78 decision—is already irrelevant.

In the second round, the rejuvenated Tigers halted the Eagles' eight-game winning streak with an 80-66 overtime win.

"I think what we spend an inspiration from the last time we played UST is our rebounding," said Black. "We like to run, we like to get out and make it an up-tempo game, so we must control our defensive boards to be able to win in this series."

At least, playing his best season for the Eagles and a favorite for the MVP award, Ateneo reserve cager Ian Seigle (shot by Jayvee Hachero, Doug Kramer and clutch shooter Chris Tiu. —Jasmine SC Payo

Pacquiao hooks 7-fight deal with Hoya

By Francis Ochoa

A VIRTUAL "KIDNAPPING" FROM THE AIRport. A visit to the gym. A private dinner.

And just like that, Oscar De La Hoya signed the biggest boxing name in the world today, Manny Pacquiao.

Giant sports network ESPN reported on its website yesterday that Golden Boy Productions signed the Filipino slug boxer to a seven-fight contract, winning the bidding war against rival promoter-matchmaker Top Rank.

"It's done, it is signed," ESPN reported, quoting an unnamed source reportedly near the contract concoction.

De La Hoya reportedly left no stone unturned in signing Pacquiao, according to another source quoted by ESPN, the Golden Boy "kidnapped" Pacquiao right after the fighter arrived at the Los Angeles airport.

"Once literally kidnapped Manny from the airport," ESPN quoted its source as saying. "It was a substantially better deal than the one Manny was offered by Top Rank."

But it was also one which left Team Pacquiao sweating over the Filipino's bout against Erik Morales on Nov. 26, the third installment of a bloody between the world's best super featherweights dubbed "Grand Finale."

ESPN sources say Pacquiao initially wanted the signing to be hushed up because he fears Top Rank, which manages him now and which is pursuing the Morales bout, will underwrite his bid against the Mexican slug icon.

However, Top Rank president Todd duBoef

PACQUIAO/A23

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7:00 PM - 8:30 PM
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Sept. 23 (Fri) - Reverence Revival
Sept. 24 (Sat) - Siti
Sept. 25 (Sun) - Hiraya Manalo
Sept. 26 (Mon) - Sugarfree
Sept. 27 (Tue) - Eraserheads
Sept. 28 (Wed) - Rivermaya

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*Terms & conditions apply.
**For selected vehicle only.

Location Map

THE REVENGE counts out Thai Pedden Sakmad as Filipino Erlindro Gejon waits from his corner

Paderna retains crown; Gejon also downs Thai

JUN PADERNA OF THE WINGS BILLY PUNCH backed out a scoring third-round knockout victory over Thailand's Chonpeth Wongpaeng to retain his Pan Asian Boxing Association (bra) super featherweight title Friday night at the Ynai Andrea Gym in Manila.

It was Paderna's second defense of the title he won last year in Bangkok. He defended it with a unanimous decision over Bahadulang Bahadon during the Gold coronation four months ago.

Paderna raised blown on his right for at his get go in pain as early upper hand.

Wongpaeng fought back in the second frame, frustrating Paderna with crisp uppercuts and counter right jabs.

Paderna, however, stepped up his attack in the third before unleashing a big left straight that sent the challenger down for good in 2 minutes nine seconds of the round.

Referee Ed Cu halted the fight as the Thai momentarily lost consciousness following the big shot by the reigning champion.

In the undercard, world-ranked Gilberto "Tubby" Jacinto, another Pinoy boxer, stopped Thai Bubbit Sakred in 1:38 of the second round.

The left and lanky Gejon subdued a crackling right uppercut that sent his elusive opponent sprawling.

In other bouts, Richard Garcia unanimously decisioned Ben Migrino; Sino Sumero prevailed by another unanimous decision over Allan Salvoguel; Jonathan Bautista decisioned Jun Pandiel, while Gerald Garcia and Tata Bernardo fought to a split draw. Aubrey L. Lagumbay, contributor

3rd British Cup up at Santa Ana

By Hussang B. Castillo

A GOOD NUMBER OF RACING ENTHUSIASTS CONVERGE THIS COMING SUNDAY AT THE SANTA ANA RACE TRACK IN SAN MATEO, RIZAL TO WITNESS THE THIRD LEG OF THE TRIPLE CROWN RACING SERIES.

The Santa Ana Race Track is the venue for the 3rd British Cup Race which is the last leg of the Triple Crown Racing Series.

The 1st leg was held last May 28 at the Manila Polo Club while the 2nd leg was held last July 30 at the Santa Ana Race Track.

The 3rd British Cup Race is a 1,200 meter race for 3 year old and above horses.

Among the horses that will be competing in the 3rd British Cup Race are Mr. Dandy, Mr. Dandy, Mr. Dandy,

[JOSE Maria Olazabal (left) and Sergio Garcia, both from Spain, are in a comm... AFP

Europeans on the warpath

'Spanish Armada' leads bid to stretch 5-3 lead over US

STRAFFAN, IRELAND—LED BY THREE BEAUTIFUL approach shots by Darren Clarke and more stellar play from Sergio Garcia, Europe took the lead in three of the four matches at the Ryder Cup on Saturday and threatened to turn a slim lead into a large one.

The Europeans brought a 5-3 advantage into the morning foursome matches in their quest to win the cup for the third straight time.

Clarke, coming back after an emotional win on opening day by approaching to inside 1-feet on No. 8, 5 and 11, for birdies. He and Lee Westwood held a 3-up lead through eight holes over Jim Furyk and Tiger Woods, who continued to struggle.

Paul Casey made a 20-footer on No. 7—his second birdie of the day—to help he and Robert Karlsson build a 1-up lead on former Cink and Jr Henry after 13 holes.

The "Spanish armada" team of Garcia and Jose Maria Olazabal led Chris Dimarco-round Phil Mickelson, 4-up after 12 holes with Mickelson's 1-0-1 over his fortnight Ryder Cup memories.

In the fourth match, Americans Zach Johnson and Scott Verplank were 2 up on Henrik Stenson and Peking Torrington after 10 holes.

Johnson, the rookie who led a comeback from 2 down to 1 to win the last three holes of the foursomes matches fro... day, stayed in form Saturday.

CLARKE AFP

He made birdies on four of his first five holes to open up 3 up, three holes another to increase the lead to 4.

Things went bogey quickly in match play but through nine holes Saturday, Johnson was pretty much the only one playing well for the Americans, who were in danger of seeing this competition spiral out of control.

Though he gained with Furyk for American's only win on opening day Woods has struggled all week and looking changed Saturday.

He blanked his second shot on the par-5 fourth to help Clarke and Westwood go 1 up. He blanked his tee shot badly on 5, barely missed his approach shot on 6, flew the green on 7, missed a 3-foot putt on 8 and missed the fairway on his tee shot on 9. He and Woods had combined for one birdie through 13 holes.

Meanwhile, Garcia and Olazabal never played any wonderful team golf. On the par-3 eighth, Garcia hit his tee shot dangerously close to the water, but it stayed upand he chipped to within inches to guarantee his par.

That gave Olazabal the freedom to try aggressive on his 35-foot birdie putt, and he made it to go 2 up on Mickelson and D. Mateo. On the next hole, Garcia made a 18-footer to expand the lead to 3 up.

Garcia's team hopes both he and Ryder Cup improve his Ryder Cup record to 12-5-2. Captain Ian Woosnam paired him with Olazabal in the better-ball matches, hoping to repeat the magic Ollie and Seve Ballesteros made together in the 1980s and '90s, and so far, the strategy was working. AP

Landis seeks arbitration on dope case

LOS ANGELES—A SEVEN-BOARD PANEL has commanded the US Anti-Doping Agency move forward in the disciplinary process against cyclist Floyd Landis, accused of using drugs during his victory in the four-de France earlier this year.

In a news release, Landis' attorney Howard Jacobs, said Landis would appeal the positive test and ask for an open hearing by the American Arbitration Association. USADA has said it would agree to an open hearing, which would probably not take place until early next year.

Landis' legal team claims major discrepancies were made in the urine chain-of-custody process for synthetic testosterone. Jacobs disputed the accuracy of the carbon isotope ratio tests and argued for analysis of a different test, the carbon/nitrogen ratio/isotope analysis, "in tandem with fundamental, gross errors," including mishandled sample-code numbers.

USADA general counsel Travis Tygart did not immediately return messages left by The Associated Press. USADA policy is to not comment on pending cases.

Landis also announced Friday that he will have hip replacement surgery soon. He hopes to be back to full health in time to train for the 2007 Tour de France. AP

Pacquiao hooks 7-fight deal . . .

From page A1

thousand each seizure.

"We had conversations with Marco Pacquiao about signing him, but our conversations were primarily about the fight with Morales," Aubrey told ESPN. "If he wants to sign with Golden Boy good for him. Good luck. It reflects the Morales-Pacquiao fight" it cleared. They had come to us about working with Morales in the future. If he signed with Golden Boy good for him. Congratulations."

Top Rank's Bob Arum, though, was reportedly miffed at losing Pacquiao.

"If he signed with Golden Boy that's part of the business," he told ESPN's Jim Rahal. "I don't give a (expletive). I really don't care. We have enough on our plate to occupy us. It would have been nice to promote Manny but if we can't, we can't. Life goes on."

Arum promised the first two bouts between Mercito Gesta and Pacquiao. He was rumored as a frontrunner in the race to ask the 10-time world champion to contract his career of his relationship with Houston middleman Shaker Ishtal.

Ishtal had been planned to promote a Pacquiao fight in the Chinese territory of Macau, site or late against Morales.

PACQUIAO

However, when Pacquiao arrived in Los Angeles on Monday, he was talked into changing to Aubrey and De La Hoya and Golden Boy CEO Richard Schaefer, along with trainer Freddie Roach, Pacquiao attorney Jung Garcia and a couple of Pacquiao friends.

Roach was also reluctant to talk about the new contract, but revealed that De La Hoya personally visited Pacquiao in the gym.

"I can't discuss it right now," Roach said. "But Oscar did come by the gym to talk to Manny a couple of days ago."

The development sets up an exciting prospect of a rematch against Morales, who lost a split decision to Antonio Barrera, who is also handled by the Golden Boy Promotions.

Pacquiao's musical chair of managers

WHAT IS COACH ALFREDO MANNY PACQUIAO'S real name?

Not from to join a high-stakes game of musical chairs.

That's what the mayor of Manila and the guy adjacent call the local dime of Howard Cosell—Mohammad Ali's favorite broadcaster—are looking into.

Mayores Lito Atienza, Pacquiao's chief admirer, and Lemuel Lim Fernando are shuffling and circling with the other players. Their aim is to drag the bad dude when the time stops.

Brawn reveals that their aim is for Manny to agree on a promotional contract with Golden Boy Promotions owned by the legendary Oscar de la Hoya.

Ostensibly, the move is to ensure the financial solvency of the highest-paid Filipino boxer of all time.

"I could wait to know for Los Angeles since I'd like to be around when the fi's are tossed and the boxers started on an opponent. I'm sure there is going to be one," said Brawn at the end of a recent "gear together" with friends in his Quezon City house.

Interestingly, the Mexican American de la Hoya—pay per view television's biggest draw—is one of only a handful of boxers in history who chose to shoulder promotional burdens while still active.

If that is not reason for he head of brothers in the ring, what is.

The Golden Boy, still fighting as a junior welterweight, handles a stable that includes the likes of Bernard Hopkins, Shane Mosley and Jose Luis Castillo. Pacquiao unexpected in the past...Knows the terms Brawn to and Oscar Larios. Two of the highest stars of the ALA boxing group of Tony Aldegaon, they have known Brawn and Al Bansil, are also with the Golden Boy Promotions.

Oscar de la Hoya on promotion or is pointed to give Pacquiao a fresh start in order for Top Rank to get out of the picture.

Brawn says the objective for the long haul is to "make pobers the outstanding days of Manny's fifth show" after his grand finale with Erik Morales at the Thomas & Mack Center in Las Vegas on November 18th.

"Let's face it, Pacquiao has always been nobbled with opponents not to close for chock," says Brawn.

"But, in the last two promotions had to learn to gradually easing to their penchant for Manny's "monster."

It is coincidental that one of those managers (Bad Samario) still has to pay Brawn's former charge, ex-two time world champion Lucian Bute a world championship purse from nine years ago.

In his American management glamor and the big-time Las Vegas promoter currently handling the 30plus champion below he gets free from their managerial hold—Brawn asks for transparency.

Obamsal Brawn:

"It, Brawell in the Mohammad Ali Boxing Act prohibits promoters from having a direct or indirect financial interest in the management of a boxer. Specifically, it is illegal to be employed by or to solicit compensation or other benefits from a promoter except for amounts received as commissions under the managers contract with the boxer—the promo is severely applies to managers."

In the first two Morales-Pacquiao encounters, as well as the fight with Larios, Top Rank's Arum was promoter.

Hundreds of thousands of dollars changed hands among the handlers, says Brawn. But guess who received top-dooring the bill?

"For the second Pacquiao-Morales fight, the perquisites or expenses included a reward/awards, one-time bid of $50,000 to go English boxing coach Freddie Roach, Pacquiao's longtime interpreter for the Filipino boxer," says Brawn. "Guess who footed the bill? And who does the interpreting work for Manny? Don't answer that one."

What their cut from the $3 million type per views income not included? Hint: the "security" boss Jaffer will get for the Pacquiao-Morales II, will be devised up among his prize winners to be seen and explained," Brawn concluded.

Sports Note: Better late than never to say farewell to former Inquirerean Mariner Ang Catalan, Manning-Tito, who died recently was a true friend and a great boss. He rescued a former newsman from the depths of unemployment and gave him the chance to revive his broadcast career in Los Angeles as a Philippine network television correspondent and local Filipino news host anchor.

SPORTSWATCH

Ecolant inaugurates shell court

SAN JUAN— THE ECOLAND PINOY TENNIS CENTER (PTC) INAUGURATED its shell surface court, the only one in the city, today. After nearly months of construction work, the groundbreaking ceremonies officially the PTC, PCSO court will finally be open to its members and the public. The ribbon-cutting event will be led by Ecoland Chairman Pio Ebergadeliza, a tennis buff himself. After the opening rites, Ecoland Pinoy Tennis players will compete against representatives from the Indian Embassy Tennis Center and the Makati City Tennis Club. The new court joins an initiative of the city's junior tennis program, which is spearheaded by incumbent Mayor Jejomar Binay. The shell court was constructed through the contribution of P.M. Sr. Mr. Lamy, Mayor Jejomar Binay and Pio del Rosario. —Jaime Medina

SHARAPOVA GUEST: Hollywood actress Cynthia Rothrock, known as the "Queen of martial arts films," will be the special guest in the 1st World Gold Cup Open Championship on Jan. 6 and 6, 2007 at the University of Rizal System Gym in Morong, Rizal. The event is being organized by Global Shaman Federation led by GM Paul Dan C. Herrera.

Concepcion fights Gonzales

PASIG—Manuel Concepcion and Gonzales will square off in a 10-round bout for the vacant IBF Asia Pacific Bantamweight title at the Ortigas Sports Center in Pasig. The bout is slated for Monday night, October 16. Concepcion (20-1-1, 12 KOs) is a former Philippine Amateur Boxing Association (PABA) champion. Gonzales (16-2-1, 11 KOs) is a former WBC Asia Pacific Bantamweight champion. Concepcion is trained by Ricky Pedrosa while Gonzales is handled by Ricky Pedrosa. Tickets are priced at P1,000, P2,000, P3,000 and P5,000. Tickets are available at the Ortigas Sports Center. For more information, call Ricky Pedrosa at 0917-5-PEDROSA (0917-573-3767).

2nd leg of LGBA staghost Sept. 21

THE SECOND LEG OF THE ALEXIS GARRIDO-LOPEZ GRAND ASSOCIATION GOLF (LGBA) stag derby series will be staged at Manila Southwoods on Sept. 20, 21 and 28 with 18-hole Derby fun. Stan Manalo, Pantay, Thunderbird, Amet and Lakeput Drug Inc. are sponsors. Each day of competition (straight flight stag format) will feature 150 fights of players. Lopez team is defending champion of the inaugural game held from 2-6 p.m. fee, $40 (9-1, 10-11 and 9-11, 2006). The guaranteed prize is P300,000 per day, with GMP awarded three "Key" Dist. Winners Nos. 1 (Mrs. Kim Bagwell) at hole no. 12, 13 and 16 holes at Manila. The fourth and final leg series on Nov. 4.

Dunes entry tops GCAP derby

DOÑA SALOME DE ARAGONES DUNES ENTRY OF RAMBRAGA ARROYO SUZUKI Dunes, arranged into champion Wednesday night in the Gentleman Golfers Association of the Philippines (GCAP) 9-stag derby at Fort Ambrosio. Dunes's last pitcher Norie was 6-on victory fights, while Nelio Bautista's Toby PEDP and Dan's Samuel Espinosa All Golds have four victories each. The GCAP-1 stag derby series resumes on Sept. 27 featuring the first leg (1% fights) sponsored by Sagayaan Consultants' 3000. GCAP's 1st leg format, which means that everyone will match their quotas and requests for no fight against a particular participant will not be allowed. Save your tickets for the Grand Finale on Dec. 6 at the Fort Revival, as established by the league council and Wednesday," said GCAP chairman Patrick Antonio. For details, call (32) 6288 and (32) 6662.

TEAM Philippines hosted third at the Federation Aeronautique International-sanctioned Radio Controlled Model Helicopter Precision Aerobatics (F3C) Championships for Rule and Oceania in Cha City Japan, recently. Brothers Mark and Alvin Alcantara landed 4th and 5th, respectively, in the individual category while Ryo Hayashi placed 14th. Japan finished 1-2-3 in the individual race and 1-on-wrap with the team title.

Sunday SPORTS

Editor: Teddyboy S. Philandras

Winslow posts 4th win; Sy settles for 2nd anew

Asian Formula Three Series
Round 12 results
(Sentul International Circuit)

1. J. Winslow	(Eng)	57:22.668
2. J. Sy	(RP)	57:26.218
3. A. Jackson	(Ire)	57:29.892
4. M. Sasongko	(Ina)	57:29.250
5. H. Kanjalainen	(Fin)	57:30.085

WINSLOW on a roll

BOGOR, INDONESIA—A RAD racer failed to stop James Winslow of England from scoring his fourth victory in a row in Round 12 of the Asian Formula 3 Grand Prix series Friday at the Sentul international circuit.

Jenson Sy surged ahead at seven at the green light went on, but he led for only four laps before Winslow roared past him and stayed in front for good.

Winslow, who won the first three races of the weekend, finished the 15-lap race in 57:22.668 minutes, 3.55 seconds ahead of Sy.

The win, his fifth for the season, solidified Winslow's lead in the overall standings with 207 points, 10 ahead of Juniors and Chicago Tjoeng.

By the 18-year-old bet of Speedmaster, Ichi his chances are improving.

"At least realistically," said Sy, who had a best lapstime of 1:26.202 just seconds of retained drivers from Winslow.

Jason Rating's Jackson, who did not finish in Round 1-2, kept Winslow within striking distance by finishing third.

Indonesian Mistress Sasongko carried the fourth place followed by Timo Kanjalainen of Finland. Ramos Ostenfeld of Indonesia (Shell Helix Electric) was an sixth; Ulrich Hartanto (Jet Motorsports), seventh; Bagus Hermanto (Shell Team Indonesia), eighth; Sterio Hermanto (BARS), ninth, and Michelle Bonggarzoe (Team Goddard), 10th.

Laylo, Dableo lead rapid chess tilt

THE COUNTRY'S THREE TOP-RANKED contenders in the Doha Asian Games lead the cast of the National Chess Federation of the Philippines rapid chess tournament today at the Syquia Residences in Makati, Manila.

International Masters Darwin Laylo, Ronald Dableo, equestrians of the men's division, and Jaden Tocong, winner of the women's slam, will test their mettle anew against their chosen rivals in the event FIDE qualifying tournament held at the Old Mall of Ads.

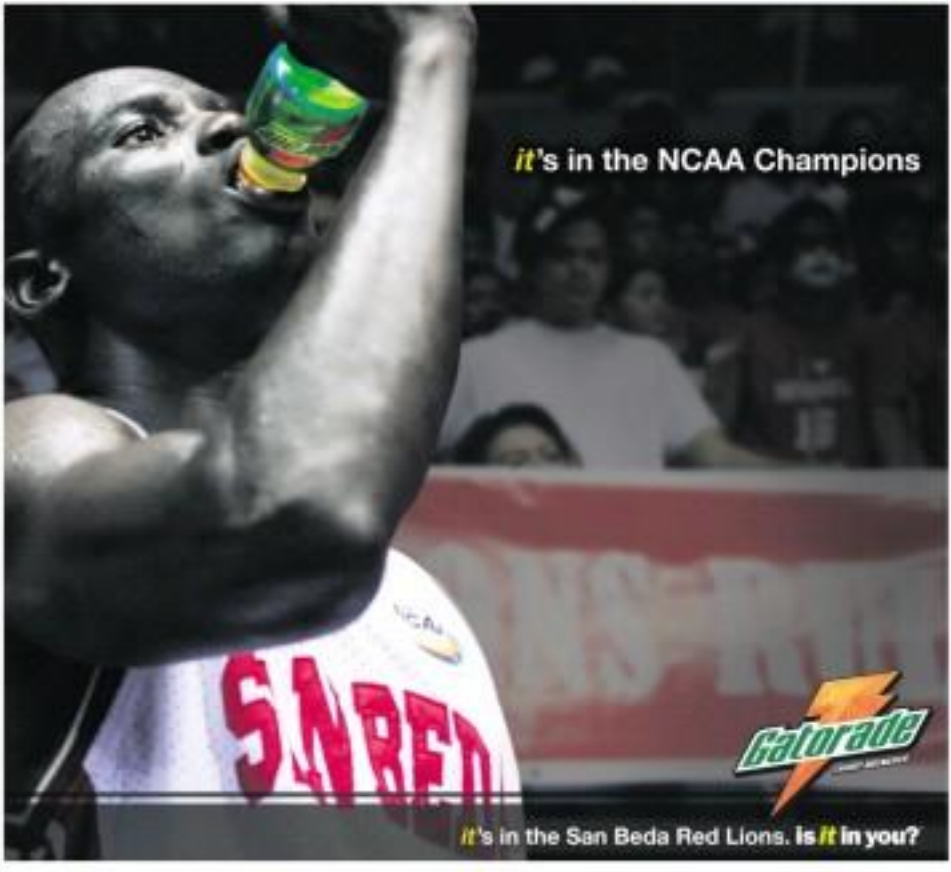
Aside from Laylo, back-to-back national titlist, and Dableo, the 2004 Asian 3-2a Grand champion, the other male participants are IM Oliver Dimakiling, National Master Rolando Siobe, IM Yves Ranola, All Buenavida, Grandmaster Nelson Mariano, II, WIM Mia Mikaylo, Rhobel Legaspi, Christopher Castellano, IM Richard Bitoon, WIM Adan Lobo IM Jayson Gonzales and FM Adrian Ibera.

Challenging the 14-man-old Dozens are WIM Jhoody Ideralma, WFM Kimberly Ann Cuizones, WIM Cristina Jean Montano, Josephine Ilongo, Maria Angeli Dimakiling, WFM Aya Paula Castillo, Jasmine Amanza, Aiza Salvador, Gilaen Ibarra and Eva Anne Petingalan.

In spite up the event, NCFP president Rep. Peregrino "Ronnie" Pichay is putting up crowd of P60,000 in prizes.

The tournament is open only to the top 75 male players and all the female participant in the NCFP qualifier.

"The one-day event will also serve as part of the line-up for our three players who will carry the country's flag in Doha," said NCFP director and tournament organizer Teller Rodriguez Lorca



Sunday BIZ

Business Features Editor Margie Quiroga-Espino

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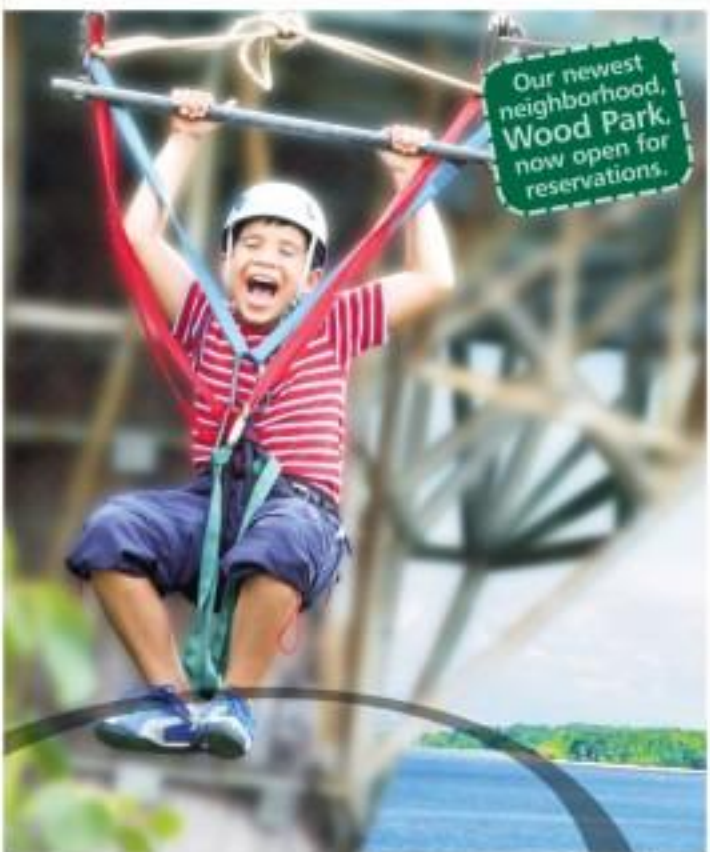
New Anvaya Cove neighborhood offers intimate brushes with nature

Wood Park's Brookside Trail - Enter the neighborhood by crossing a bridge over a natural brook lined by picturesque trails

Sunset Deck will naturally offer memories and picturesque glimpses of the sea

AyalaLand PREMIER



My son could not stop talking about the rush - he plans to make this his regular weekend sport. It gives new meaning to "frequent flier."

ANVAYA COVE

A mother called 'Ama'

Honoring an influential women in taipan's life

IT IS SAID THAT BY battle, when a soldier dies, he calls not for his wife, nor his children, but his mother.

A mother's role in the life of a son is comparable to none—not even if the son is one of the richest men in the country.

When it comes to wealth, tycoon George S.K. Ty belongs to a handful who can afford almost everything money can buy. But whenever sorrow in the Southern Tycoon differed that the soldier. He found and valued his mother, Doña Victoria Ty Tan, matriarch of the family of Bank Secretary Ty, until her death last Sept. 14. She was 97.

To honor her, Ty donated P20 million to the Metrobank Foundation, an amount that will enable the philanthropic institution to expand its programs for the environment and for the less privileged.

Twelve years ago, Ty established a tradition of shining with the community to mark important events in their family. In 1994 and in 1999, during the anniversary of his own birth, Ty opened family accounts in the foundation.

This generosity is a way Ty got from his mother. Gentle and generous have been synonymous with the name Metrobank Road Driver. Her grandchildren would receive money in their birthday and special occasions.

"I learned from my mother that it is not enough to just smile most of the time is a need to share," says Ty, chief of Metrobank.

During an interview with the BusinessMan a few years ago, Ty says his mother is a point to give great many tips, how and especially abroad, to share what he has and to honor the image of the country.

"She taught us the values of entrepreneurship. Frugality, discipline, hard work, and just plain stubbornness in the face of never ending challenges."

Goldman Arthur Ty, president of Metrobank says: "She was the inspiration from which [our] family has prospered and grown ... in her passing, she is still the glue that holds us together. She lived a simple life. Her weekly activities consisted of visiting her grandchildren and always had a ready smile to encourage.

Ama raised her children and grandchildren to exercise economy and avoid waste, a trait she impressed until the end. She believed in living a disciplined life and was an advocate to lead work ethic believed in the best.

VICTORIA arrived from Fujian, in 1916

been sources of her children and this compelled them to succeed. She provided moral support to all their ventures and had no doubt that they would accomplish great things.

To Ty adds, "Ama believed success came to the one who worked hard. She watched all to succeed and it made us to push ourselves to the limits."

Ama exhibited this tenacity early in her life. The challenges of conquering from Fujian, China to the Philippines in 1916 were not for the faint-hearted. She started as apprentice in the heart of the Chinese business district on Tabora Street in Divisoria and rose to Ylaya with 7 to 11 people, 7 to 9 in a room. Ama found the difficulties and hardship with a strength that came from within. A commitment even to her last hours on the pushed her 97-year-old body to keep on going, much to her doctors' astonishment. Younger persons had been known to give up under such tremendous pain.

As family and friends gathered in her wake held last Sept. 14 to 17, they recalled the quick, tiny Ama many special. Her small size and keenness, friend children narrated how she would remind them to switch off lights at television sets when there were not in use. Energy conservation was also money matter. So we dubbed us regulars in them this once or her 3-year-old granddaughter would crawl under the table to unplug the TV in a matter of habit.

"She was also very thrifty, advocating us to always turn off the lights. The sayings, unplug the TV. To this day, I have a hard time leaving a room without turning off the lights," says Arthur.

Even as the family prospered, Ama chose to live simple. While the start have been frugal with herself, she was generous to others.

One little known vignette with him, as a young wife she would prepare a sponge cake with a piece of meat for their family meals. Ama would take the leg, and let herself and give the rest to her children. The sacrifices were took on different forms. As a mother-in-law, she projected the food for her son's wife who delivered a baby. She saved to the market herself, selected the freshest meat, and cooked it for the recovering daughter-in-law. She had Chinese herbs for the grandchildren and supervised the preparation herself. Even when she passed away, she left behind her legacy.

Beyond corporate philanthropy, Ty likewise subscribes to sustainable development work that will better the quality of life and enable the marginalized sectors of society to improve their status. He places a premium on discipline and hard work, which are the core values inherited from his parents.

TAIPAN George Ty with mother Victoria

Business Opportunities

Learn to make soap

LEARN THE technical know-how of how to make soap and start your own business.

The Golden Treasure Skills Development Program will conduct a one-day seminar on soap-making to be by College of Social Work and Community Development (CSWCD) at Magsaysay Avenue, cor. "Maroon St., University of the Philippines Diliman, Quezon City on Sept. 30. Interested may call Grace, 0918 gen.

Expected to be discussed are: sourcing of materials and costing. Participants will experience how to make to make liquid dishwashing soap, liquid hand soap, liquid all-purpose soap, bar detergent soap, herbal bath soap (papaya, kalamansi, cucumber, oatmeal etc.) powder soap and shampoo. Bonus courses are liquid bleach, fabric softener, tile and bowl cleaner and how to process virgin coconut oil.

Participants will receive certificate of training right after the seminar. All the materials will be provided. For questions please call 922-40-28, 436-76-26, 982-29-99, 981-29-46, and 921-69-91.

Earn extra by making candles

DO YOU CAN your money and, at the same time, earn extra cash on all kinds? Do if you can learn how to make candles. The Golden Treasure Skills and Development Program will conduct a one-day seminar on artistic candle making at the Vermont Rizonia Orthodox at Rd. 5 Proj. 3, Quezon City on Oct. 7, 2006 by Tuesday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Topics to be discussed are: sourcing of materials, costing and how to store and maintain a business. Participants will learn to make candles using different methods and techniques such as the dipping method, pouring, molding, carving, hand forming, carving, shocking they will be taught how to make traditional candle wax, textured candle, gel candle using yellow type paraffin wax, candles in glass containers and many more.

Participants will receive certificate of training right after the seminar. Lunch and snacks will be served and will be materials will be provided. For questions please call 922-40-28, 436-76-26, 982-29-99, 981-29-46 or 921-69-91.

are you CLEAN?

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The GREEN-E AWARDS shall be given to outstanding projects and programs that demonstrated superior and exemplary achievements in the development, utilization and promotion of renewable energy (RE) resources and technology and contributed to the economic, social and environmental development of the country. Award winners will be recognized at the Green-E Awards Ceremony during the National Energy Week annual celebrations in December.

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Application Forms are available at
http://cbred.doe.gov.ph
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Deadline of submission of entries: October 31, 2006

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Gift of life becomes source of life

By Carlo P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—A BOUTIQUE set up to fashion accessories business for cold stones. But when fate interfered that, she started of cold stones became the source of income for her family.

Celeste Bermejo Villacin, 44, a one of several entrepreneurs belonging to the Association of Negros Producers, joined the group's 22-day Negros Trade Fair from Sept. 22 to Sept. 26, at the Rockwell Tent in Makati City.

She started her business with P8,000 in 2001, when she and friend Lourdes Saldenanza showed a few samples of the bracelets and necklaces they had made from beads and shells to their ASAP president Gloria Diaz.

Diaz liked their designs and urged them to sell the jewelry at the ASAP showroom in Bacolod, Villacin recalls.

"My first check for a month's sales was P500. I was so happy with the check. It felt good to know that people appreciated my jewelry enough to buy them," she says.

Cute, who has a degree in business, left from the bureaucracy of the Philippine army, quit her job to become a housewife when she married Innocent Villacin, a small supermarket owner.

She says she started making fashion accessories when she considered a major job for her, and was bitter. A few years before that she had suffered from colon cancer in 1995 and she underwent chemotherapy and radiation.

She survived her cancer but in November 2005 stupid events—her husband was diagnosed to have lung cancer, stage four.

The huge medical expenses incurred during her husband's illness drained their resources. Despite the efforts to treat her husband, he passed away in May 13, 2006.

"My husband had constantly encouraged me to go on with my business. That helped me find myself, boost my confidence and feel complete. And by God's grace, my little business that grew saved my family when my husband died," she says.

Then is because the P8,000 she invested in her jewelry business allowed her to have something to fall back on. The monthly checks she has been getting from her sales at the ASAP showroom have increased and have been sufficient in keeping her family going and putting her children, Adrin, 20 and Ben, 14 in school.

With the help of ASAP, Cute says General Coordinator has given her many opportunities to showcase her products, provided its members cash in project development, trends and tips on running one's business.

ASAP president Gloria Garcia says this year's trade fair, chose the theme "Gifts of Life" because ASAP has provided the opportunity for many small businesses to grow and create world-class products.

Out of the P1.28 million earned sales generated by ASAP members, 70 percent comes from export, and 30 percent comes from domestic sales, she says.

Their annual trade fairs in Manila have drawn from 5,000 to 7,000 visitors composed of buyers, manufacturers, exporters, foreign and local tourists and the public.

These trade fairs have also generated over P1.5 million in domestic sales yearly, both from on the spot sales and orders generated, Garcia says.

The ASAP started when businessman Daniel Lacson Jr. pushed for the creation of small business entrepreneurs to create more jobs and to help Negrenses cope with the sluggish sugar industry.

At Negros, there is economy economy rushed from the drop in sugar prices in the 1980s. Lacson, along with other members of the Negros Business Forum, pushed for diversification.

In answer to Lacson's call, about 35 housewives and a group of businessmen formed the Negrenses started the Homes of Negros, which organized the Association for Negros Producers.

When Lacson became governor of Negros Occidental in 1986, he encouraged the Negrenses producers to organize and the Association of Negros Producers was born.

From a small group of 35 producers, ASAP has grown to 96 producers who have generated 15,000 jobs, Lacson says.

Twenty percent of ASAP's members now export their products to the United States, Italy, France, Germany, Japan, Australia, Africa, the Middle East, Scandinavian countries and Singapore, Garcia adds.

Over the years, and since ASAP was started by 15 housewives, the ASAP membership profile has been largely dominated by women—professionals, businesswomen, housewives and rising graduates.

Currently, over 80 percent of ASAP membership is composed of women—either alone or with their husbands, Garcia explains.

The ASAP showroom have indeed come along way from the garage days in the 80s when they first began. It enabled people with talent and inclination, even with little savvy capital, to make it go of their businesses," Lacson says. "All are great times was spread to an organization that helped them develop and market their products, which has become a model that has been replicated in other parts of the country."

Lacson says the goal in the 1980s was to create more jobs outside of the sugar industry and today ASAP's success is a decent fulfilled.

CELESTE Bermejo Villacin

CASSIVE's new creation: bamboo bags

Transforming plastic junk into works of art

By Odilo T. Mallari Jr.
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LUCENA CITY—WANTING TO HAVE AN additional income to support his wife and 2 grade-school daughters, Sheldon Flores, 23, got his creative juices flowing and started transforming plastic junk items into simple but exquisite works of art.

It can start as one pity plastic bottles of 1.5-liter soft drinks. Some are molded into various different models of miniature vases and flower plants with the use of sharp, pointed scissors and gas-fueled disposable lighters.

He visited his craft fair, Amores sibo ka Manila (mood sculpture, Amores, inspired visitors but for a few months so he stuck to the rural village of Dalahicat.

Finding nothing else to do, especially when Bunso was doing part-time work in rural furniture and construction workers, Amores started creating shapes from empty soda plastic bottles.

"I was amazed at how he turned empty plastic bottles into shapes of vases. It caught my interest. I started observing how he worked. I also prohibited him to touch me the tools," Bunso recalls how he was introduced to the art.

When Amores returned to Dalahicat after a few months, Bunso who left on his own. But instead of feeling abandoned, he took it as a challenge and further improved on what he learned from his nephew.

After several trials and errors, I was able to create my own models," Bunso proudly says.

He says he usually looked at the vases and plants in his surroundings to images to copy.

With pointed scissors in hand, the part-time farmer and laborer displayed his dexterity in cutting and transforming an empty gasoline/kerosene container into a vase or canal from one side of the bottle and a house-like body trim in another.

But the time two inches above the base, he cuts in a spiral manner up to the top of the bottle using the heat generated by the flame for from the disposable gas lighter to make a flex. He used to effect the desired shapes like branches of the tree, a cactus for the coconut palm or to add some extra height to the or body.

With his skillful fingers, Bunso even carves a leaf figure patched atop one of the branches of the transparent plastic tree.

Bunso says he could finish a minimum of 10 modern day.

"I only use colored plastic bottles of 1.5-liter soft drinks. The figure looks dull if I use colorless containers. I also use to remind the yellow plastic bottle of a popular green tea beverage," he says.

He can have, decided Rivera, 27, buys empty plastic bottles from junk shops and stores at P3 per piece.

Assisted also shares her cousin Geminez creativity. From colored plastic "sacks" bags common in the market, she cuts and creative petals of flowers which she glues atop the stem in one of the plastic plant fig. ures.

She sells the works of art of her husband for only P30, P50 and P80 each in the Lucena public market, but terminals and to nearby provinces. She also has one regular customer who buys all finished products to sell in town by town.

"We know what they are cheap if we consider the hard efforts in their creation. We just want to share them to others so that they can also appreciate them," donated philosophically says.

She says the items were always selling fast.

"My buyers could not help expressing amazement on the creativity of the designs. I'm proud of my husband," she says.

With the base filled with multi-colored stones or even marbles to weight stabilize the plastic vase and plant models are eye-catching table displays, for the office or the living room.

The item will also be an interesting gift to him for the coming holiday.

"The money received is small but it's another source of additional income for my family, especially when there's no job offer from the tobacco-rotation project," Bunso says.

He says he was seriously working on a new design to hone for the upcoming Valentine season.

With the unselfish artist blood in him, Bunso says he is now willing to share his techniques and know-how to whoever is interested so that he can have a ready hand in case of more demand for his art works.

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Sunday LIFESTYLE
Editor Chelo Barail Formoso

SELECTION

CHILLED gazpacho with lemongrass prawns

Moving in the right Circles

Makati Shangri-La gives its café yet another facelift and once again leads the trend in dining options

A MARVELOUS REVOLUTION in good taste is taking place at the Makati Shangri-La. Enticing food concepts, culinary displays, great service and generous toppings of art are what diners can expect from Circles Event Café.

Restaurants usually make food preparations in kitchens, out of sight of diners. It was Circles that introduced open cooking and let diners taste it, other hotels and food places had followed suit.

At Circles, individual open theater kitchens and cooking stations treat diners to actual food preparations by the hotel's culinary team. This is theatrical dining at its most appealing, not only gastronomically but visually, aurally and olfactorily as well.

"Circles Event Café offers more than a great variety of food, it also presents a dining concept that leads the market in this culinary night at the center of Makati," says Philippe Garrett, the hotel's new vice president and general manager.

"The dining scene has evolved remarkably in the country over the past three years," he adds. "However, the buffet scene has remained fairly stagnant, that is why we are pleased to lead the trend in the country and revolutionize the buffet experience."

Delicious makeover

Circles, so named because of the circular design of its counters, is a 600-seat, all-day dining hall. It has five culinary stations and a diverse offering.

Key design elements include a number of circular set pieces and fiber optic lighting of different colors. The light jewels on the fiberglass logs running through the floors and up to the columns and ceiling.

Circles has two large plasma television screens. It offers comfortable dining options with large seating areas that allow guests a fabulous view of the garden and waterfalls or a view of the busy streets of the financial district.

Gastronomes will enjoy the eclectic choice of dishes.

Perhaps the biggest and most exciting innovation is the Connoisseur Candy Counter.

Check out the variety of cosmetic candies and flavored chocolate lipsticks. The counter

FEATURES C3

FRESH fruit selection

CHILLED pumpkin soup with seared scallops and braised cucumber

PGMA on UnitedForHeadbedding campaign

COOL couple Patty and Chris Ong

BMW model couple Dhan and Lira Gervas

DENTIST couple Pia and Jane Tripoc

BMW girl Leana Fernan

SISTERS act Amanda and Luica Carpo

Now, class, let's talk about anatomy

Tessa Prieto-Valdes

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED about the ideal "whiteness" of your teeth? Here's a good rule of thumb: They should only be as bright as the whites of your eyes. Any whiter and your teeth would look like dentures.

After many months of delay and dicing, I finally visited my dentist, Dr. Pia Tripoc (2/F Tower I Building, Ayala Avenue, Makati, tel. 8922289), who gave me an informative lecture on tooth decay while I was having some cavities filled. Doctor Tripoc has some tweakingly, amazing dental equipment that can photograph and screen in on the areas of decay in the teeth.

I never knew that tooth decay is actually a contagious bacterial disease. I was shocked to find out that a high percentage of decay is due to infection being passed down—from simple things like sharing drinking glasses or utensils or by kissing. Most of us can probably give up the first two but not the last! In fact, since I don't avoid the last item with my husband, I will just have to make sure his enclosure gets fixed.

In the world of dentistry, the advancements of technology has been quite remarkable. My sister, Sandy Bermudez, and I have fond memories of my mother's dentist in Bacolod. His pasyente named like someone and his metal, manually adjusted, dental chair was attached to an intimidating, screeching drilling unit. No wonder our collective memories of dentists are so bad—a visit to the dentist was akin to a trip to a torture chamber!

Not anymore! These days, there is soothing music and a chair that has more functions **than the space shuttle.**

According to Tripoc's space-age dental equipment, my Decay Risk Level is medium. Sick with shaky-pitous accuse, in short, no-more midnight snacking of chocolates, chips and other desserts. He suggested chewing gum or mints containing Xylitol, a natural sugar from birch trees that has significant effects against decay causing bacteria.

I'm a sucker for new products, so I rushed out to buy some Orbit sugar-free gum to start my battle with decay and leave my teeth best on their own, all while still getting as much as demand.

Eyes

"There's really nothing like good health. Its it's not only my teeth that have been occupying my time lately. My eyes were part of the Eye Bank Foundation of the Philippines' campaign called "Years of Hope, Years of Health."

With the support of Vision Refresh and Powerbooks, Dr. Mingcois Padilla, founder and cohair of Eye Bank, produced a book of all the exquisite photos taken by top fotomen **Jun de Leon.**

My particular photograph was taken when I was still heavy and pregnant with Athena, but Jun, being the master of beauty through the camera, made me look stunning.

The book is now available in Powerbooks and National Bookstore, and by purchasing the "Behind the Years" book, you would be supporting the sight restoration programs of the Eye Bank.

To all my friends reading this, you may already have an idea what your Christmas gift this year will be.

Breasts

This column is sort of an anatomy class, because from teeth and eyes, now I can move on to my breasts. Both took center stage earlier this month for the Beauty, Smiles & Breast-feeding Campaign of the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef).

Since I was breastfeeding earlier this year, my baby Athena and I had a photo session with outstanding photographer Pancho Kreuzer for this advocacy. Little did I know that my photo would be chosen for all the posters and billboards nationwide.

For the whole month of September, the largest mall in this part of the world, Mall of Asia, has a photo exhibit of mothers and personalities who truly believe in the benefits of breastfeeding.

Thanks to Beatrix's expert bra-angling, my breast materials a G cutting. Athena's cute mouth and hand perfectly covered the naughty bits while still projecting the breast-feeding message. The pictures are so huge that not even famed body sculptor Dr. Mollé Bali's enlargement tits that well!

Recently, gracious host Mobi told me all about the possibility of breasts enhancement over a dinner for the benefit of cancer-stricken Banjo Bhargava. She opened her house to generous friends like Hotel Elizabeth owner Beth Fernando and made sure all enjoyed the dinner menu by master chefs Ed Quimson and Henry Sison.

Vicki and I discussed the theory that having fat removed from the back shoulder area may cause the breast to become larger, as body tissues from one area is another. Let's call it the "fit something fat fold freeing" Theory.

Speaking of which, that's a perfect segue to another short paragraph on my Sumoquino Manila. Vicki is one of my big-hearted friends who are supporting the Assumption Mission Schools. I guess with all the weight the Infantans are losing from homecoming practices, we are now ready to Vicki's target market.

Stomach

Continuing our anatomy lesson, let's not forget the stomach! Makati Shangri-La executive chef Christopher Bonnin pulled all the stops at a birthday dinner for me at their classic Red restaurant.

Bonnin's menu re-used Rhoda's Campus prepared passion and giveaways and I drove to special "non-party" giveaways from my fave graphics couple, Rhy and Norman Cruz of artworkorgirls (www.artworkgirls.com.ph, tel. 8406882).

While going through the Christian's voyage of delightful dishes, Shangri-La's new dashing VP and GM, Philippe Guerrid, told me about their new Filipino High Tea at the Lobby Lounge. An interesting twist to some of the dishes are very Pinoy like Arbogha. The ongoing festivities overlook a garden with newly installed whimsical sculptures by Claudio Tayag.

Feet

Today's body lore ends with my feet, which got ample use while dancing at Embassy after the BMW launch of their new and bold colors for the 1 Series and 3 Series Limited Edition models. Well-loved designer Bajo Laurel designed the models' black, white and red

MMAT's, Breast & Breastfeeding Campaign runners with PGMA and Unicef head

BELLE mom Jean Saenz and Atom Hesares with Dr. Vicky Belo

GOOD-LOOKING family Nikki, Jessica and Manuel Jr. Gonzalez

CLOSEST friends Aimee Sun Diego, Virgie Ramos, Maurice Arevalo and Gloria Roda

FAB DESIGNER Raja Laurel, Maureen Santiago and BMW head Dr. Joerg Braun

BMW AG Michael Hartong with Raja Laurel models

LOVELY moms Dennis Tan, Audrey Tan Zubiri and Becky Garcia Sandoval

SUMMER Mom Zaza and Mikaela Angela Tirona Chua, Christina Sicaldo and Mary Mead

ARTIST Claudio Tayag is flanked by Makati Shangri-La vice president-general manager Philippe Carroll and hotel PR Joy Nicanor

EXECUTIVE chef Christopher Bonnin

ACHIEVERS Ann Hyo and Herman Cruz

GENEROUS friends Joel and Ana Fernando, Luica, Nina and Benjo Marquez, Jerico Fernando, Sea Princess, Beth Fernando, Zita Lim, Mara and Dr. Jesse Corres

YOUNG mommy Q Tiangi

Moving in the right Circles

From page B1

also offers white chocolate and butter cream lip gloss and candy mascara, as well as kiwi-, raspberry-, and vanilla-flavored syrup and ice cream toppings.

The hot dessert counter offers ganache chocolate tart cream as well as cupcakes.

Sinless culinary food options are available, ranging from seafood catch, subi and tartaru prepared by Jungle's master cook Ami to fresh veal steaming Cantonese dim sum and Chinese barbecue items.

There's a generous lineup of fresh chilled seafood items. A classic stay check the cream brulée and salted and superfruit mousses.

The salad station has been revamped into a "green garden," where the chefs cut fresh vegetables and prepare the salad dressing of your choice.

At the deli section, you can try the juicy cuts of the finest quality meat and poultry as well as the fresh catch of the day.

For more spicy fare, head for the noodles' zone and pizza counter.

Circles also sets the bar in terms of drinks, such as wine, cocktails, local fresh juices and healthy concoctions.

Bhakti Khanpit Lo is recognised for offering a variety of outstanding cuisine through its other dining places, namely Red, Rising Palace and Jungle.

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Cleanup at Gawad Kalinga

PLANTING for the future. PSC president Victor Paterno plants the first of the saplings that would soon line the village's main avenue (left). He paints the exterior of a house in the course of 7-Eleven's community service project in Tondo (above).

OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES OF 7-Eleven marked 7-Eleven Day by launching their first community service project.

The group helped clean up and paint homes in the Gawad Kalinga Village in Bagong, Tondo.

The 7-Eleven Day is an annual celebration worldwide.

Alcantara Paterno, Philippine Seven Corp. chair, told residents of GK Village Bagong that the country wanted to show all 7-Eleven stores around the world that there was a more fulfilling way to mark the occasion—by sharing and helping uplift the Filipino families.

Philippine Seven Corp. is the country licensee of the 7-Eleven chain.

Gawad Kalinga builds homes for free for homeless Filipino families.

MAKING a clean sweep. Ervin Arroyo, Philippine Seven Corp. (PSC) PR specialist, and employees clean the streets of the Gawad Kalinga Village in Bagong, Tondo.

Family history fair Sept. 25-30

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF Latter-day Saints, in cooperation with the Department of Social Welfare and Development and the Iloilo Mafia, will conduct a Family History Fair 10 a.m. - 9 p.m., Sept. 25-30, at A/L Market Market, Taguig.

The event is part of the celebration of the National Family Week this year. President Fidel V. Ramos' Presidential Proclamation No. 60, signed in 1992, set aside the last week of September as National Family Week.

The fair will include displays, one-on-one instructions on searching microfilmed records, and tutorials on online researching. Family histories and artworks depicting family trees will also be displayed.

Rolmo Gapas of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints said the church wanted to share its vast experience and resources to those interested in researching their ancestry. He said it was also an opportunity for people to learn how much value the church put on the family.

As early as 1894, the church had maintained family history and genealogical records to assist members in researching their ancestry. Today it owns the world's largest collection of genealogical records with over three million rolls of microfilm containing billions of names, over 700,000 microfiche and more than 270,000 books and several unique family history databases.

In the Philippines, almost 90 percent of available vital records have been microfilmed. Some 150 Family History Service Centers nationwide offer free service to the community.

The main center is in Greenmeadows, QC. Visitors can do research on their ancestry using microfilmed Philippine vital records, some dating as early as the 1500s. Well-trained volunteers are available to answer questions and help people in their search. Call 1-800-1115-8743 toll-free.

Weekend baby fair

GYMBOREE PLAY AND MUSIC, A GLOBAL early childhood development program with over 340 sites across 26 countries, and Lifetools Network, a holding firm over Gymboree Baby Fair Oct. 5, 7, 14 and 22.

The event is being held in cooperation with Johnson's baby product brand Unwinding.

Learn childbirth preparation techniques from 25-year veteran Rosie Batugal; ask about breastfeeding tatch La Leche Liga advocate's Abby Yabut; discuss attachment parenting practices with Illa Amperegan; and learn how to breastfeed in style and on-the-go with television personality and mother of two, Daphne Oseña-Paez.

Topics on brain development and touch therapy will also be included. Children 14 years old and below can play while their parents attend seminars, chat with other parents, sample or purchase baby products on exhibit or sale, or simply relax at the mommy lounge.

Two free passes will be given away to event registrants. Pre-registration and seminar attendance are required.

Call 9107529, 8370052 loc. 251, 7757939 or visit www.gymboree.ph.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Sunday LIFESTYLE

Story of great love

Text by Allison M. Lopez
Photos by Helen Ch and Chito Vertes

IT WAS A LOVE THEY BELIEVED TO BE THE greatest of all, even before it occurred to them to formalize it with wedding vows. And now young couple Benjamin "Ben" Story and Kathrina "Jean" Go-Tuddenn have more reason to believe that it is so.

Ben and Jean smiled, giggled, cried and held hands as they said their vows in the Archdiocesan Shrine of Jesus, The Way, The Truth and The Life church in Pasay City.

Then parents beamed proudly from their seats, watching intently as the two, both the youngest of their broods, took the "plunge." Relatives and friends attended in droves, eager to see the well-loved couple who looked most beautiful together that day.

BEN and Jean
Join Caballero's Story

He popped the big question even before he could get her an engagement ring

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Admit it. You like being told that you're beautiful.

Cold husband leads to warm Internet friendship

DEAR EMILY:

My husband and I have been married 13 years and we have three children. My husband has been unemployed for five years now. I am the only breadwinner in the family, but that's all right. I teach college and my salary supports us.

He was my very first boyfriend. But I cannot understand why he treats me so coldly now. I feel he is not concerned about me or hurt I feel.

I always wish he would ask how my day was or send at least one text message to a day and say hi. Once, I wanted us to talk but, before I could begin, I saw he was already fast asleep.

In times like this, I cool off by logging on to the Internet.

This was where I "met" this guy and we developed a friendship. I found out we were both from the same province. He is also married, with three kids, and the names to have been living abroad the past three years.

He "chat" on the Internet all the time and we have become very familiar with each other's problems and stories.

He tells me he feels closer to me than his wife. He sends me the messages I wants to hear from my husband. He even tells me he is already falling for me.

On my part, however, I don't tell him anything about how I feel. I enjoy his messages if I don't get any and he says he feels the same way.

He asked me if we could see each other when he comes home for a vacation. I told him maybe, but I know I won't.

I know this feeling is wrong, but is it okay if we go on chatting even if we don't see each other? Is it also okay to fall in love with each other on the Internet and not do anything about it?

I still love my husband very much despite his coldness. I just want him to show me that he loves me, too.

MM

Lonely people look for diversions to help them cope in the frontier that feels like a locked bridge. Some take up hobbies, others join health clubs or look to religion for succor.

EMILY'S POST

Emily A. Marcelo

Many people have discovered the Internet and this has opened up a whole new world of freedom and boundaries.

You're one of those people and, whether you admit it or not, this little flirtation has raised the relentless loneliness of your broken marriage and your life has become a bit more tolerable, don't?

Unfortunately, these same diversions end up as problems rather than solutions. You are compounding your problem with another problem.

This Internet friendship may seem benign to you, if not innocent. But remember, there are emotions involved here. Unless you're communicating with a robot, which he is not.

It's time you realize that you are may be playing with matches here. Those little sticks that can start any fires are not going to burn your house—no, but play with them long enough and they will.

You're lonely... he's lonely. How soon before you both try to ease that loneliness? He's coming over for a vacation and, through his sheer persistence, you might just meet up with him for a completely innocent cup of coffee. Till then, more subconscious is the power of loneliness though.

Your husband's financial dependence on you is very reassuring and unnerving. Its rich unpredictive and a burden and this coldness may be his way of masking his emotional insecurity.

Talk to him plainly and quietly. Assure him he is a major part of your family and this unemployment is just a minor setback. He can assume the role of a househusband and take care of the house and family. That is perfectly respectable, too. John Lennon was one toward the end of his life.

Try to rearrange his mind so such possibilities. That might pave the way to renewing your love as well.

E-mail this author at emarcelo@inquirer.com.ph. Subject: Lifestyle, or send your letters to Inquirer. Listen to this show's on-line companion "Radio Inquirer," 7:25 to 8:30 p.m., Monday to Friday, or dial 87 104.5 FM

SUNDAY CROSSWORD

PREMIER CROSSWORD/ By Frank A. Longo

MARRIAGES

answer on page D4

EDIFYING HOST International Finance Corporation (IFC) Vice President Peter Woicke (left) and Philippine Ambassador to the US Albert del Rosario (right) host a dinner for Philippine Chief Executive Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (center) at the Ambassador's residence in Washington, DC, on Sept. 19. Woicke and del Rosario are among the Filipinos who have served in the World Bank Group, which includes the IFC. Arroyo is in the US to attend the 61st session of the United Nations General Assembly. PHOTO FROM PRESIDENTIAL PHOTO OFFICE

Our Lady of Caysasay goes to San Fernando

THE ORIGINAL IMAGE OF OUR LADY of Caysasay will be brought to the Temple of Mu-ibo (formerly name of Our Lady of Caysasay) in San Fernando, La Union, Sept. 25, 2 a.m., after the Rosary vigil to the shrine in Santo Labor, Tod, Batangas.

Rest stops on the way will be in Calaca, ILOI and Lingayen Complex to Tarlac.

A religious procession will start at 3 p.m. in front of Plaza Hotel on Quezon Avenue going toward the Mu-ibo Temple. At 5 p.m., the images of Our Lady of Caysasay and Mu-ibo will be brought to St. William cathedral where Archbishop Oscar Arguelles will officiate in a consolidated Thanksgiving Mass.

Offerings and prayers will be made Sept. 26, 8 a.m. Then at 5 a.m., 10:30 p.m. every day, prayers will be offered at the altar of the two images.

Revival

The Chinese tradition of bringing the goddess Ma-cho to the Lubao shrine of Our Lady of Caysasay was practiced by generations of Chinese, but stopped in 1974.

In 1985, the image was brought from San Fernando, La Union, to Lubao where Archbishop Arguelles celebrated Mass. He promised he would revive the tradition.

Powerful queen

In the Chinese hierarchy of folk deities, Ma-cho (Mu-Tzu) is the powerful Queen of Heaven and protectress of the sea. She is the patron saint of fishermen and overseas Chinese.

Legend says she was born a mortal, Lin Mo Niang (silent girl), during the Northern Sung dynasty (960-1127 A.D.) near Meizhou Bay in Fujian province.

During her lifetime of only 28 years, she was said to be exceptional. by pure of spirit and compassionate, with supernatural powers. She supposedly performed miracles, subduing evil spirits and averting disasters at sea. She sacrificed her life, while trying to save seafarers.

After her death, people began to pray to her for success and good fortune. She has a huge following in China's coastal areas. In Taiwan, where many Fujian folk migrated, she is worshipped by almost two-thirds of the population.

In March, Taiwan celebrates her birthday in over 500 Ma-cho temples. The most famous of the ceremonies is the Ma-cho procession or journey, often lasting (sic) trying (sic) to (sic).

In Macao and Fujian, Taiwan and in Lubao and Batangas, millions of devotees believe the goddess is real and the same as Our Lady of Caysasay. The Filipino-Chinese communities based in San Fernando City, La Union, go on a yearly pilgrimage to see Lady of Caysasay shrine in Tod, bringing along the image of Mazu Ma-cho.

Volunteers

There are women committed to uplift women and children through out the world. They call themselves "zonta women," which means in the "face for women." The Soroptimist International Club of Makati (SIM) is one of 98 in the Philippines.

Members are professionals, business executives and government officials. They set up a free school for farmers' daughters and a night vocational school for women in Ilihan. They also assist in making operational the Philippine National Police women's and children's desk.

Recently, they helped plant trees along C-3 fronting the Heritage Park.

For the biennium 2006-2008, Bella Cuenco Buencillo, a former banker, is the new president.

The induction and installation of officers was held recently at the Manila Peninsula Hotel to Makati. Guests included Makati Congressman Teddy Boy Locsin, Mayor Manila Binay, Department Authority chair Bayani Fernando and Tet Bernardo Chua, president of Sorosphilia International of the Year (SIY).

Yes to the first Filipino woman and the second Asian (the first was a Japanese) to become SIA president.

Officers inducted were Cecilia Sarmiento, president; Amie Stella, vice president; Ada C. Villanueva, secretary; Mel Vilva, assistant secretary treasurer; Beth Cuenco Isaf, assistant PRO.

Directors were Coby Ng, Lipaya Dadeh, Nilda Barce, Dulce del Rosario, Claudia Cuenco and Bessie Escalona. New members are Lori Cuenia, Pat Rimann and Joan Ngapitan.

Magnificent

The San Lorenzo Ruiz de Manila Parish is a magnificent testament of adobe stones, skillfully sculptured designs, colorful glass paintings, and a spacious interior with no use of columns. Every Tuesday evenings are a grand for a regular healing Mass.

Countless parishioners have given testimonies of how God, through the prayers of Saint Joseph and San Lorenzo Ruiz, performed sometimes miracles of healing—physical, spiritual and even financial.

Many claim San Lorenzo Ruiz is truly the patron of Filipino migrants. Like Nadine, a resident of Pleasant Hill Subdivision, finally were overseas as a woman after days of novena prayers to the Filipino saint.

The parishes of Saint Peter, also of Pleasant Hill, were answered after religiously attending healing Masses. She is now studying in Scotland. Lesser Grace started attending the healing Mass in 2003, always bringing along her two children. She also prepared the novenas. They left for Ireland in August.

Irene Ibarola, who attended the Tuesday Mass for five years, said her prayers were also answered through San Lorenzo Ruiz. Her family has lately for their United States.

Fr. Mario Jose C. Ladra, parish priest, is inviting people to visit the church at Pleasant Hill Subdivision, San Jose del Monte City Bulacan. Regular healing Mass is at 7 p.m., Tuesday.

The parish celebrates its annual fiesta and Sandalakol Festival today. The Pontifical Mass, with the Most Reverend Cirilo R. Almario Jr., D.D., as main celebrant, will be held 10 a.m.

Philippine Career Society

The San Juanan Women of the Philippines will hold a dinner dance at the Rizal Ballroom of the Shangri-La Makati Sept. 26 in order funds to support the programs of the Philippine Cancer Society. Call 7312128.

PURELY PERSONAL

Josephine Barcelo

Clark hosts fair

HOLIDAY INN CLARK is holding Wedding Exchange, "where buyers meet sellers," Sept. 30-Oct. 1.

The by-invitation-only event is designed primarily for the couples-to-be planning to get married. They have to register in advance to get an invitation to the fair.

A feature of Wedding Exchange is a simulation of an actual wedding in the Grand Ballroom. It will show a complete array of food, beverages, flowers, music and rides.

Holiday Inn Clark Philippines is located along Mc-Arthur Drive, Mimosa Leisure Estate, Clark Field, Pampanga.

Call 8431888 or (045) 9990888 loc. 1295; visit www.holiday-inn.com/hiclark/fieldd.

FIXED. Cars, lifestyle guru

Bridal series

FOLLOWING THE SUCCESSFUL launch of its Weddings & Beyond total gift registry, Rustan's will hold a series of bridal events.

Each department—from fashion to fine jewelry, home, cosmetics and toiletries—will be gathered in a menagerie of shows and talks, pampering services and workshops.

Last Sept. 2 at the Home Level of Rustan's Makati, Rustan's Private Sale presented home-entertaining tips and essentials. She gave seasonal hints ranked, fishing your serving plates to proper pairing coordination.

Rustan's also showed its latest merchandise under its Home collection, from kitchen to dining utensils and housewares.

Participating in the bridal series are Wedding Essentials, Shopwise and All-Credit Cards.

Call Rustan's Makati, 8133739; Shangri-La, 6334606 or 6344656; Alabang Town Center, 8505532; Gateway, Cubao, 9132404 or 9124405; Robinson's Place, 5112788 or 5515020; Harrison Plaza, 5111149; Cebu, 032-2315641.

WITH the groom's relatives at the reception

WITH the bride's relatives

Story of great love

From page D1

Then again, Ben and Ami had always looked beautiful together. Both having the same mestizo features, they were mistaken even mistaken for siblings.

Remember what they say about couples who look like each other being compatible? A story he true to life case.

'Company K'

Ben was 22 when he first met Ami, who was three years younger. They belonged to Company K (for "Kids"), a neighborhood barkada of about 20.

They were not childhood sweethearts... Ben visiting from the United States, when he was barkadamates, when it was summer down.

The two naturally stuck to their age group. Still, the group had lots of memories to share (oh years later... or more specifically, 10 years after, when Ben and Ami met again as freshmen at San Beda College in Mendiola).

After a few dates, they realized they had much more in common than Company K. They became inseparable.

On their third anniversary as a couple, he gave her a "promise" ring—to show his commitment to her and their future.

After graduating from college, Ben returned to the US but they managed to keep the relationship afloat with constant calls and e-mails.

"He promised that we won't be more than six months pass without seeing each other," he says. (It would either come here or she would fly to the US.

In August 2005, at the John Hancock Tower, the highest observatory in Chicago, Ben popped the big question even before he could get her an engagement ring. His true-striking episode? "I don't have the ring yet, but I didn't want you to leave without knowing that I want to spend the rest of my life with you." *Aww! Who wouldn't say yes?*

"I like him as a person. And he liked me for me," says Ami. She adds, while previous boyfriends wanted her to be more "ladylike," he let her be her own playful self.

Between the two, she is the more outgoing type. "I love the way she lights up a room; she knows how to make people laugh. Her true human love she deserves to be treated," says Ben.

"WHEN you realize you want to spend the rest of your life with somebody, you want the rest of your life to start as soon as possible." —from one of their favorite movies, "When Harry Met Sally"

WITH THEIR PARENTS: Antonio and Divina Caballero, and Imelda and Ernesto Ibarra

WITH THE BRIDE'S FAMILY: Marisol, Michelle, Jennifer, Mom (Imelda), Chel Tong, Richard and Baby Ann Ibarra, Jojo and Hanna Jasmine Martin and baby Liam

WITH FRIENDS and faculty from San Beda College Alabang

WITH THE ENTOURAGE: Allison Lopez, Steffani Co, Glennis Narciso, Olivia Sto. Cruz, Jacqueline de la Fuente, Pia Mendoza, Tracy Suarez, Ross Kaw; the best man, Ben's brother Luis Ibarra, Dominick Schmidt, Perry Quimbo, Paolo Martinez, Kristen Narciso, Mark Caballero; and flower girls Serena Bascara and Prue Caballero

WITH THE PRINCIPAL SPONSORS: Carmelita Sto. Cruz, Janaryn Santos, Elvira Cortero, Lucile Balingbang, Teresita Santos; architect Teodoro Martin, Susan Lee, Ed Kaw, Elmer Mendoza and Steve del Rosario

Six months later, in February 2006, Ben finally gave Ami a diamond engagement ring in a formal pamamanhikan set up by the two families in Manila.

Princess

On her wedding, Ami looked resplendent in an elegant princess-cut gown in chiffon satin with minimal beading, designed by Joel Escobar. As accent, a wine-red ribbon was etched on the waist in keeping with the motif.

Ben was Prince Charming in a black suit over a maroon dress shirt. His uncle, Abbot Tarcisio Ma. Narciso, OSB, solemnized the wedding.

In lieu of souvenirs, the couple chose to make donations on behalf of their guests to One, the campaign against poverty and AIDS, and Livestrong, the Lance Armstrong cancer foundation. Guests received white or yellow bullet bands inscribed with the foundation's name.

At the reception in Hyatt Hotel and Casino Manila, the cameras never stopped clicking. Every table had disposable cameras to catch those candid moments. And, instead of the bride and groom hopping from table to table to have picture taken with guests, every "table" went to them, seated on a sparkling sofa at the center, before heading for the yummy buffet arrayed at the ballroom's entrance. Quite practical, indeed.

Digicams and camera phones were everywhere, and the newlyweds didn't tire of posing with eager guests.

Perhaps it was because they knew they would be newly-mixed. After honeymooning in Hawaii, they will settle down in mainland US.

The new Mr. and Mrs. Ibrra are starting from scratch in a foreign country, but they believe anything is possible as long as they're together.

We believe them.

Get used to it. Marionnaud Now open. 2nd Floor, Mall of Asia

Milestones

We welcome announcements of weddings and engagements. Submit names of engaged couple, names of parents, date and place of wedding, and gown designer along with a photo of the couple and a sketch of the bridal gown, if any, to the Features, PO Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City. E-mail to lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph. A photo of the bride and groom is required if the wedding has already taken place. Announcements will be printed depending on space availability and on one unit in the month.

MAGALLONA-LOPEZ

Dr. Jeny Lopez, daughter of Ludovico and Miriam Lopez, will tie the matrimonial knot with Dr. Toto Magallona, son of Edwin (deceased) and Adella Magallona, on Sept. 30 in the Instituto de San Jose, Greenhills, San Juan. Reception will be held at the ballroom of the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club, Mandaluyong. Edw Pineda designed the bride's gown using ivory Italian satin. The mismatch groomsmen will wear chiffon gowns in pumpkin orange and brown.

LIM-BROWN

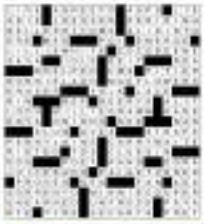
Vincent Brynn Lee Lim, son of William and Ruby Lim, and Leslie Ann Brown, daughter of the late Antonio and Suzette Brown, exchanged vows recently at Shed for the World Christian Fellowship Makati.

The bride wore an over-duchess satine bouffant gown, embroidered with staccato beadwork by Leonard Co.

WILLIAMS-GUEVARRA

James Hezekiah Williams, son of Leroy Williams Sr. and Marian Williams-Leonard of Binghamton, New York, USA, will wed Dr. Agnes Elsa R. Guevarra, daughter of Dr. Anacleto and Elsa Reyes Guevarra of Davao City, on Sept. 30 at the St. Francis of Assisi Church, Mt-a, Davao City. Reception will follow at Waterfront Insular Hotel, Lanang, Davao City.

ANSWER TO SUNDAY CROSSWORD

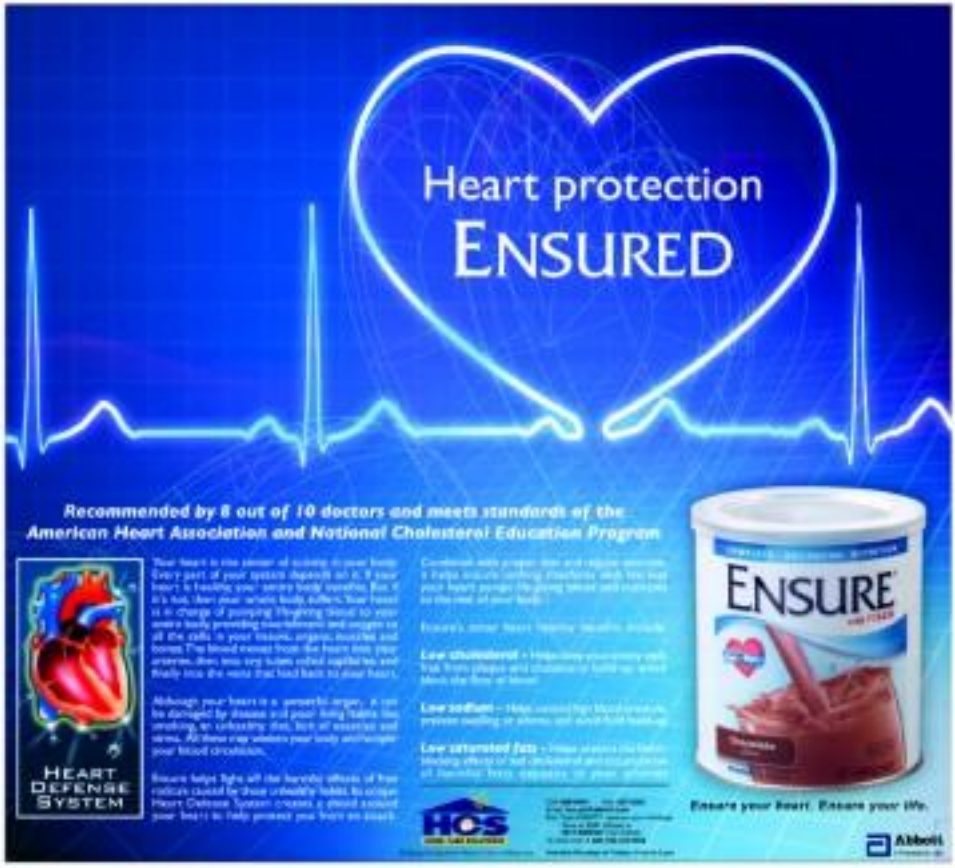


DE GUZMAN-RODRIGUEZ

Julius Peter G. de Guzman, son of Peter and Paulyn de Guzman, will marry Jeanne S. Rodriguez, daughter of engineer Secretino and Letizia Rodriguez, on Oct. 21 at the Sanctuary, Divine Mercy Shrine, Marilao, Bulacan. Reception will follow at Alessandra Garden, Meycauayan, Bulacan.

ALUMBAUGH-GALEMBA

Steve Alumbaugh, son of the late Aubrey and Sylvia Alumbaugh, will wed Gloria Galemba, daughter of Pedro and Pamilla Galemba, on Oct. 14 at Our Lady of Lourdes in Tagbilaran City. Reception will follow at The Bohol Tropics Resort.



Sunday LIFESTYLE Travel

Beyond the Brunei beauties

Virgin forests make the sultanate a paradise for mountaineers, bird-watchers, exotic-plant enthusiasts, and lovers of nature

Afritada Best!

Tuna bliss – that's Century Tuna Afritada!

Each bite bursts with the deliciously blended flavors of deep-sea tuna meat, red and ripe tomatoes plus tangy red and green bell peppers and special spices... brightening your day, warming your palate, comforting your cravings for a hearty, home-made meal. Luscious and juicy, sumptuous and saucy, Century Tuna Afritada oozes with the healthy goodness of Omega-3. Best for your heart, best for your appetite, best for you! Truly Afritadalicious!

MONKEYS at the Bukit Shahbandar Recreational Park in Brunei

CEILING of the five-star Rizqun International Hotel

Beyond the Brunei beauties

Text and photos by Bibay M. Carballo
Contributor

IT IS A SAD COMMENTARY of our society and its propensity for gossip that our knowledge of the sultanate of Brunei is almost exclusively hinged on the scandal involving the so-called Brunei beauties in the late '90s.

Almost a decade after, the celebrities in that disgrace have transcended the incident, gone on to marriage and family, leaving behind the gossip that was fodder for media and that instigated a formal inquiry.

But years as these seasons have worn and responsibility, Brunei's image has remained. Friendly jokingly asked if we were joining the Brunei beauties, inquiring that we bring home Sultans as pasalubong.

When many Filipinos do not know it, with the country's income from oil and gas proceeds, citizens (less than 400,000) have one of the highest per capita incomes and standards of living in the world.

Everyone owns a car and Brunei has a 92 percent literacy rate as education is free. With about 70 percent of the country a virgin forest, it is a pollution-free ecological paradise.

Health and housing are free. People get a rice allowance. Here is an income tax and government loans are available at the incredibly low interest rate of one percent annually.

Sultan's birthday

On a quiet part of town stands a rambling wooden house where the Sultan, who celebrated his 60th birthday last July with month-long festivities befitting his rank and pedigree, reputedly was born, which speaks of his once humble beginnings.

Residents are proud of this building, although it is not part of any tourist itinerary.

Brunei is situated south of the Philippines, less than two hours by air.

The area of 5,765 sqk is divided into four districts: Brunei-Muara where the capital is located; Tutong, Belait, and Temburong. It has a tropical climate much like the Philippines' . Mobile phone services and internet facilities are everywhere, and most nationalities do not need a visa.

There are many mosques and museums, but Brunei is known for its rainforests, making it a paradise for mountaineers, bird-watchers, exotic plant enthusiasts and lovers of nature.

Three recreational reserves are in the Brunei-Muara District. Tasek Lama boasts of a natural waterfall and lake surrounded by forest. Rosalam Forestry Recreation Park is most popular for its picnic and barbecue facilities overlooking the South China Sea; the Bukit Shahbandar has hilly terrains with forest creatures willingly posing for the camera.

Being sure to the extra prayer, the parks are popular with residents and foreigners for leisure and meditation.

True virgin forests

But the true virgin forests are much farther, like the Ulu Temburong National Park, home of the country's 35,000 ethnic tribes where the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corp. and Brunei Museum partner in managing the Belalong Ecological Park, a haven for protected wildlife and an area for scientific research and study.

Further away is the Belait District with its Jungle Living Forest Recreation Park, said to be one of the most well-preserved in the world.

In the Temburong District near Labuk is the Rainforest Field Studies Center, a joint venture of Brunei Shell Petroleum and the University of Brunei with its complex of modern homes and research facilities.

It is in these forests that the camper Professor Kirnbay with his book like none can be found, where microbiologists and scientist fanatic bask in the sun, and where rare species discovered were 400 species of beetle in a single tree!

The sultanate of Brunei's sovereignty once extended over the entire Borneo and parts of the Philippines. Sixth-century Chinese traders and explorers knew it to be an Islamic state as early as 1371.

In 1521, when Magellan discovered the Philippines, Brunei was already a powerful maritime sultanate, the heart of a trading and tributary empire that dominated the Southeast Asian region.

From 1841-1945, North Borneo with Brunei was a British protectorate, and a part of the British kingdom. From 1941-1962, though it has retained much of its Islamic traditions.

Venice of Asia

The Kampong Ayer in the sprawling 39-acre Water Village is a testament of those days when Brunei was a simple fishing village and people lived in a labyrinth of waterways negotiated by water taxis very much like those in Venice.

This is why Kampong Ayer in the Brunei-Muara district is often referred to as the Venice of the East. To this day, some 30,000 live much like their forefathers did in stilt houses.

One afternoon accompanied by Dayang Asyati Binti Abdullah Omalla and her lady Abdullah, Filipina married to Brunei citizens, we took a water taxi and traversed the byways of the village. It

VANESSA, who runs a bar at the Malaysian border, and daughter

UNASSUMING two-story wooden house where the Sultan of Brunei was reportedly born. It is not on any tourist itinerary.

STUDENTS at Arts and Handicraft Center in Brunei work on a fabric with gold threads, which takes months to complete.

is a community complex in itself, where everyone rides with in the modern parts of the Sultanate pack their cars on the shore and take the water taxi to go home.

On the shore overlooking the Kampong Ayer is the Arts and Handicraft Center where students are trained in the age-old traditions of weaving, silversmithing and basketry.

The Tamu Kianggeh Bru market on the banks of the Kianggeh River sells local foodstuff, products and handicrafts. A uniquely and typical Brunei handicraft are the very colorful food covers woven from coconuts.

Visitors attracted to the nightlife, however, will be very much disappointed in Brunei. Being a Muslim country, drinks are banned from being served in public places. After dinner time, the city is quiet, the nightlife already in their homes.

Those aching for a fun Miguel Hotel will have to go across the border to Malaysia's border town of Limbang, 25 minutes by road from the city center, or other border towns further away.

E-mail the author at bibaymail@yahoo.com

Stylish travel at cost

American Tourister's new tag line, "Low Cost, First Class," reaffirms the company's belief that traveling need not be expensive. The ad campaign introduces new collections —Envoy, Airwrap, Orsetto II, Mix, Special Edition and MXT. Each American Tourister product is backed and guaranteed by Samsonite, a brand synonymous to quality and durability. Last year, American Tourister started reestablishing its presence in the Philippines. It is now in over 50 outlets nationwide, present in The Travel Club, Body Print Philippines, The Landmark, SM Department Store and Robinsons, among others.

PRIVATE CLUB FOR BUSINESS AND PLEASURE

The three-hectare Palma Country Club Island in Filinvest Corporate City in Alabang is a private membership club for family and business communities. It offers a resort feel within the corporate city. The club was designed by Wimberly Allison Tong and Goo of California. Supervising architect is Roger Villarosa, the interiors were done by Arlyn Guerrero. It offers a complete range of services and first-class facilities. Its food centers offer a variety of cuisine from sandwiches and salads to more elaborate dishes. The Palma can also be a venue for different events like weddings and birthdays. The Palm also has Bliss Garden Spa offering soothing massages. Facial care or aromatherapy services exude, glow and hair salon. Camp Coco is every child's indoor and outdoor playground.

TRAVEL BRIEFS

New rewards program

Etihad Airways, the National Airline of the United Arab Emirates, has launched globally the Etihad Guest program, its new loyalty program. The program drops restrictions traditionally associated with loyalty schemes, replacing them with a flexible range of features and services. Also being implemented globally is the global network of 35 passenger destinations. The Manila launch was hosted by Manuel Silvestre, Etihad Airways manager for Philippines.

Membership is free and information is available. For more information or to enroll online, visit www.etihadguest.com.

Etihad Airways flies to Manila four times a week—Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday (airlines at 8894-433-3).

Travel Mart '06 opens

Pata Travel Mart 2006 (PTM06) has opened in Hong Kong, with arrival halls' top floor space at 4,300 square meters. Pata 2006-2007 chairman Nunoo said, in terms of destinations and industry sectors covered, the mart was now the biggest travel trade show in Asia Pacific.

Pata president and CEO Peter de Jong said a total of 611 buyers representing 322 organizations from 54 global source markets had arrived for PTM06. New buyer markets represented at PTM06 include Hungary, the Czech Republic and Peru. The Asia Pacific brand and tourism has expanded with international visitor arrivals increasing by more than 1.4 percent in 2005.

New York promo

Philam Savings Bank will raffle off two six-day, five-night vacations to New York City, USA, in three Sex-Themed Big Apple prizes. Each New York travel package comes with a room for two at Sheraton Universal Suite hotel, two tickets to the winner's Broadway show choice and $561,000 pocket money. To join, just bank on auto loan or deposit with Philam Savings Bank. Visit the nearest Philam Savings Bank branch for inquiries. Promo period ends Oct. 31. The winner will be drawn Nov. 10.

Rainy day special

Club Manila East in Ugong, Pasig, introduces its rest season special, "Keeping the bond strong and making it last," featuring special packages for couples and barkadas. The Couples Delight Package, P5,695, includes two-night accommodation for two, dinner for two, and breakfast. Couples also get a surprise gift. The special Barkada Treat Package for groups of 4-10 costs P800 per person. It includes one night stay, dinner, etc. Call 6405307, 3866518 or 6405366. Visit www.clubmanilaeast.com.

'Shop your way to Milan'

Singapore Airlines, Tiendesitas, and the Embassy of Italy showcase the history, arts, fashion and flavors of Milan until Nov. 6 in "Shop Your Way to Milan."

"Wine your Way to Milan" edition Singapore Airlines' journey simply making a minimum purchase of P1,500 to any of the over 40 participating retailers and check at the Piazza. Log on to www.singapore-air.com/love.singapore.

Seminar packages

Oasis Country Resort in La Union has a daily Hotshot buffet 11 a.m.–2 p.m., Monday-Saturday, for P375 per person. The buffet offers Ilocano and international dishes. For dinner, it has nightly specials like Bulalo, Thai, Japanese, etc.

The resort also offers Hotshot's parties for a minimum of 30 kids for P500 each. For business events and meetings, the resort offers five-to-one live-out seminar packages and a small meeting package. The Bank/Country Resort is on the National Highway Sevilla Crossing, San Fernando, La Union. Call (72) 7550886 or (72) 6444 for visit www.oasiscountryresort.com.

NEW HOTELS STAFF

The International School for Culinary Arts and Hotel Management (ICAHM) over 30 culinary and pastry graduates to the new Wyndham Manila. The ICAHM students were chosen because of the quality of education at ICAHM that responds to the international standards of five-star hotels. ICAHM faculty members have 1-19 years of combined experience in five-star hotel work. Enrollment is ongoing for January and June 2007 classes. Call 4368888/4361461 or e-mail sales@icahm.com.

PRE-HOLIDAY SPECIALS

The Malayan Plaza offers special Pre-holiday Room Escapades for business and leisure travelers, ethnical residents. Enjoy rates of some available for P1,488 net. Special room rates are valid until Dec. 31. The Malayan Plaza is on 4205 Ayala corner Quad Road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City. Call 7568955 or visit www.quantumsuites.com.

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• Pre-activated GLEP for 100 calls for as low as 0.50/0.35 per minute.	• Pre-activated GLEP for 300 calls for as low as 0.50/0.35 per minute.	• Pre-activated GLEP for 500 calls for as low as 0.50/0.35 per minute.
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Sunday LIFESTYLE Home

Behind clothes doors

A guide to a more organized closet

By Kathleen Ong
Contributor

What does your dream closet look like?

"Organized. I'd like it to be all white inside with enough hanging rods, drawers and shelving for all my clothes, shoes and accessories—like in magazines."

What does it look like now?

"Hmm, I think if somebody looked me up in the a-, it'd basically suffocate and die."

—A.L. consultant

THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO have their dream closets, but most people don't. I'm constantly encountering the typical one-rod and too-few-shelving type of closet, a design that can be a cause of disorder. But, whatever closet situation you have, organizing and weeding out items you own will not only make it work for you but help you appreciate what you have.

When is it time to organize your closet?

- You can't even slide your hangers across the rod for more than two inches.
- You have a cabinet full of clothes but still feel like you have nothing to wear.
- You buy an item, plant it in your closet and lose it.
- You're late for work again because finding the outfit you need is a struggle.
- Your partner's clothes are slowly but unmistakably taking over your share of the space.
- You pull out the wrong piece of clothing and get buried under a clothes avalanche.

What must you do to succeed?

1. Keep in mind that it might not be just three hours but longer (depending on the size of your closet and amount of items).
2. Do not watch TV. Turning on the radio or playing your favorite CD will give you better results.
3. Focus and move quickly.
4. Remember why you are putting in the effort and what constrains you are aiming for.

What should you aim for?

1. Easy access and visibility.
2. Categorized storing. Hang all long sleeves together, all short sleeves together, fold T-shirts together etc.)
3. Keeping only items that make you look and feel good.

What tools will you need before starting?

1. A container labeled ACT for action. This is where all items requiring action will be dumped. (Repairs, return, give, donate, etc.)
2. Big trash bags.
3. One pad/paper. This is for writing down any incidents that might pop up while organizing.

How can you regain control of that jungle in your closet?

1. Focus on one area. If you have a couple of cabinets, concentrate on one area before moving on to the next to avoid being overwhelmed.
2. Start emptying your chosen area. Go items six to three!
3. Separate and create new piles for each different category. (Trousers, shirts, similar sleeve length tops together, suits, dresses, ties etc.)
4. Start editing. Start with one type of clothing (example: trousers) and decide if it's a keeper or something you can live without.
5. Hang back on items that you clearly like and use. (Remember: by category!)
6. Finish one specific pile first before each thing the next.
7. Only set on your ACT box and re-do-like after organizing your chosen area/areas. Do your best not to get side-tracked.

What can help you decide whether to keep or hang?

1. Examine and fit clothes that you have not worn in a long time. Honestly assess if these still fit well or still look good on you. (Are you sure you can still breathe?)
2. If in not comfortable, forget it—even if it's expensive. Whether you're going to work or to a party, you won't be able to make the most of the event when you're too preoccupied with feeling awkward.
3. If you're having a really hard time deciding which to keep or toss out, invite a friend whose style you admire and let that person help you choose the "right" outfits for you.
4. Be honest about regrets and decide if an item is worth spending time and money on.

What else do you need?

1. Uniform hangers. This gives your closet an instant stylish look. Get the same color, size and type. Make sure it's sturdy.
2. A carpenter if you see you need one to create more shelving or add another rod for hanging bottoms.
3. Cloth bags for gowns or expensive suits you rarely use. (Protect from the elements here chemicals in them that can harm your clothes instead of protect them.)
4. Labels/containers for storing out-of-season clothes to be stored away from home you often use.

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INQUIRER

CLOCKWISE, from top: specialty circle windows; casement; skylights

Window shopping

BEFORE YOU THINK THAT ALL GLASS windows are alike, check out Andersen Windows and Doors' high-performance Low-E4 Glass soft-coat windows.

Low-E4 glass windows feature an innovative exterior coating that, when activated by sunlight, helps reduce dirt buildup and water spots up to 99 percent. In consequent versatile Low-E (low-emissivity) coatings, which are applied to one of the glass surfaces, deflect radiant heat and let in visible light. The glass coatings can allow in clear glass and cut ultraviolet light, offering improved protection from fading for interior fabrics and furnishings.

Andersen Low-E4 glass also features energy-saving technology to help reduce cooling bills, not to mention reduce sound penetration.

For heated homerooms, however, this is the best part about living in a home with low-E4 glass windows: They are easy to clean.

A dust protective film is applied to the interior and exterior sides of the glass during manufacturing to provide additional protection against shipping and installation hazards as well as construction site debris. It is easily removed and helps reduce clean-up time after installation.

The Andersen High Performance Low-E4 glass is exclusive to Andersen Windows and Doors, and will be a standard feature on Andersen 400 Series products.

Andersen Windows and Doors is exclusively distributed by CAE Enterprises Phils. Inc. with showroom at 1/F Home 2301 Atlanta Center 31 Annapolis St., San Juan, Metro Manila. Call 7224071, 7228068; fax 7224970; or e-mail caeent@yahoo.com.

T&T wash double hung windows with modified Colonial grilles

Bonsai seminar-workshop

BONSAI PROFESSOR SERAFIN S. Merilla will conduct a seminar-workshop on bonsai Sept. 29 to Oct. 1 at Metro Plaza Arts, Ring Louis Garden Center, Manila Sandbag Bank, corner Edsa and Quezon Avenue, QC.

The course covers identification of materials, shaping, styling, techniques of propagation, potting, re-potting, and care and maintenance.

Materials will be provided for the hands-on part, such as pruning scissors, bonsai pot, glass material, wires, potting medium and moss, among others. Snacks, handouts and certificate will also be provided.

Call 9394593, 9351479 or 0917-8311352, or e-mail merilgalen@yahoo.com.ph.

MERILGALEN professor Serapion Merilla

SPENCER Shin, Samsung Electronics Philippines Corp. president and CEO, with Hega's Saul Yap, ABS-CBN Publishing's Thelma San Juan and Summit's Lisa Estrangero-Cheng

SPENCER Shin; Ronnie Salvacion; Paulo Pineda; Fe Abella, Samsung Electronics head of Mobile Phones division; and Charles Choi, Samsung VP ICT

Slim, sleek and sexy

THE SAMSUNG ULTRA EDITION FEATURES incredibly slim mobile phones of sophisticated design and with state-of-the-art technology. The features are enhanced through the use of top fashion and beauty photographers Ramon Salvacion and Paulo Pineda, whose glamorous photographs were exhibited at the Greats Plaza.

Their latest unveil is on Samsung's Ultra Edition 6.9 (SGH), Ultra Edition 9.9 (SGH) and Ultra Edition 12.9 (SGH).

Lucky winners of the raffle hosted by Samsung during the exhibit opening were the first proud and happy owners of the Ultra Edition 6.9 (SGH).

At only 6.9 mm, the Ultra Edition 6.9 (SGH) boasts of the world's thinnest profile.

The Ultra Edition 9.9 (SGH) features a new clamshell handset that is 9.9 mm thin.

And the Ultra Edition 12.9 (SGH) has the world's slimmest slider with a depth of only 12.9 mm and a picture-perfect 3-megapixel camera.

"With the Ultra Edition's exceptional sleek and ultra slim design, Samsung's mobile phones will effortlessly integrate into the user's everyday life, connecting them to the rest of the world," said Spencer Choi, president and CEO of Samsung Electronics Philippines Corp.

PEN Bagsic, Chief Communications officer/country representative

AMORE Linkaus, Samsung brand marketing manager

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CECILLE Murvilla and Jeaneva Ermac (VP for Marketing Grace Hega-an) with photographers Jo Ann Bisagral, Sara Black, Marc Nicdao, Jibi Reyes, Adelgazar Arenas-de Leon-Hiltcan and Soria Marketing Communications team

Digicam debuts

SONY'S SLEEKEST ELD DIGITAL camera, the Alpha-55, was launched recently at the Gateway Mall, Araneta Center's premier shopping landmark.

The launch featured a photo exhibit showcasing artistic-japanese verses as photographed by Jacinto Leon, Mark Nicdao, Jo Ann Bisagral, Sara Black, and Jibbi Mendoza. The exhibit, "Memoirs of Alpha", also showcased the versatility of the Alpha-350, with its built-in super-broadcaster function, 10.2-megapixel resolution, and other innovative features packed in a compact, lightweight camera.

Present at the opening of the exhibit were photographers Nicdao, Black, Bisagral and Ver-

SARA Black, one of the featured photographers, with ABS-CBN Publishing's Philip Cervantes

GATEWAY Mall Marketing officer Ed Portolio, Grace Hagan with Sony Philippines rep associates

SONY Phils. president Hiroaki Kobayashi and Ambassador Ryoichiro Yamazaki with Araneta Group EVP Judy Roces and CEO Jorge Araneta

For every drop you give, you get every drop back.

In everything you do, you give drops of yourself. Drops of hardwork that lead you to greater things and push you closer to your dreams. We at The Coca-Cola Company are one with you. We are here to give every drop back — drops that inspire, drops that motivate, drops that meet your needs. We do this not only through the products we make but also through programs that provide nutrition and education to communities here and around the world. For you, we offer drops that make a difference. So you can enjoy every drop of life.

The Coca-Cola Company
bowat patak, mahalaga

THE GREEN landscape, which provides opportunities for picnicking, people-watching and good conversation, is one of Legazpi's hidden treasures.

This way to Makati's version of Greenwich Village

MAKATI'S LEGAZPI Village is a 43-hectare community bounded by Amorsolo Street, Paseo de Roxas, Dela Rosa Street and Ayala Avenue. It teems with trendy bars and cosmopolitan restaurants, quaint shops offering vintage finds, beauty salons, and little nooks and crannies.

Even if it is your first time to be in Legazpi Village, you won't help but feel the color and unique vibe pulsing through the district that is reminiscent of Greenwich Village in New York.

Old Manila Caffe Sta Ursula at the Palace Plaza II on Dela Rosa Street offers good food at reasonable prices. Try its Sinigang na Bangus Belly (P200) or its Dil Manila Kare-Kare (P300). Wash it down with a cup of special organic coffee from Mt. Apo, Davao.

Dr. Nada Hotel...took out Foreign Indian Cuisine, an authentic, reasonably priced Indian restaurant with a homey ambience. You can order the regular rice special at P80 or the buffet rice set at P15. For appetizers, try the onion bhajis for P100. The dish is sliced onions and spices, rolled in chick peas and flour, then deep-fried. For the main course, try the chicken curry, or the mutton Korma for P198.

Caffè a Go go on the ground floor of Kalayaan Building on Makati Street is the official home of the Tuna Sandwich in Legazpi Village. Grab it with or without cheese (P124 with; P109 without). Iced tea comes bottomless at only P50, as in

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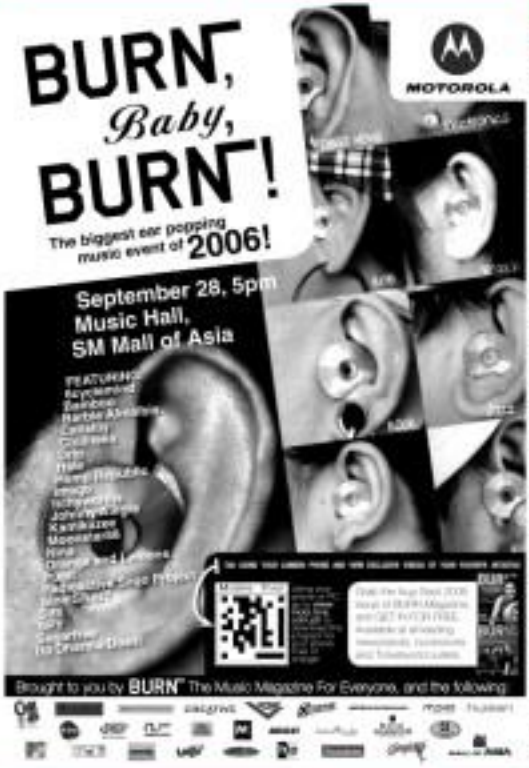

From page B1

Judge yourself.

"You may want to try La Gorda, a cozy, quiet and unpretentious Italian restaurant on Bailen Street fronting Esteban Street, which has an elaborate menu. They have, among other merchants, mozzarella, prosciutti with melon, shrimp cocktail, scallops in balsamic herb dressing, and of course, pizza. Prices are P200 and up.

If you get a sudden craving for Cuban food, try Tita Lou's, say the air-blended drink and its mouthwatering Chef Latoz at Concierge Building on Ayala Avenue and Salcedo Street.

Speciality shops

There are a number of finery shops, such as Phenom at Zeta II Building on Salcedo Street, and Phenom some on the fourth ground floor of Cityland 3 at the corner of Esteban and Bailen Streets, a deserved rosco with five P1,000.

Not pampering, go to Cut Loose Salon on Esteban Street; Radiance Cut Salon at the Prince Plaza 1 on Legaspi Street; Cullen Gentlemen Grooming at Executive Motor on Aguirre Street; and Zalon de Ess by Picasso at the Manc Tower Building on Palanca Street.

For ridiculous mind-body bliss, Ban Lalisa Spa at Embryo Condo on Salcedo Street, is your best option.

Those who have a fetish for pottery will call Chef's Options Mall Art & Beauty Center (BAC) Tower, Legaspi Street), Glenn Mel Salon (VIP Solomon Building, Salcedo Street and Nail Spa (Landon Hotel Corner) in Hall.

Nail Spa offers nail repair and paraffin treatments for hand and feet on top of the regular manicure and pedicure.

The village offers a host of domestic services.

Laundry shops are everywhere. One of them, Lavada Loca at the Prince Plaza II on the corner Zeta Row and Legaspi Street, offers not only wash, dry, fold and dry-clean services, but also alterations.

Lavara de los Gamales at the Fine Midland Building on Gamboa Street is a must-see for those who want to accessorize their homes. It has exquisite contemporary and traditional furniture and accessories imported from Spain. The friendly owners, Di Enriquez, gives tips on mixing and matching accessories.

For a more One-laugh ambience in designing a home, turn to Lucio's next-door neighbor, Indigo Interior Design.

Another thing that Ayala Legaspi Village abuzz is the Legaspi Sunday Market. Held monthly at the head of the Carlos Palanca Park on Paseo de Roxas, the Sunday Market is filled with interesting finds. Gets dripping with seafood and organic vegetables to abaca slippers, mangosteen jam and wacky tissues made of used tea strainers.

A word try to the Indian Indigo, a

AYALA BY NIGHT From the top floor of one of Legaspi's tall

AZURE Cake along Esteban Street is a result of an inventive mind

EXQUISITE ensembles remind of rough and tired-looking fur at the Nail Spa along Gamboa Street.

SPRIGHT Indian Cuisine on Rada Street offers reasonably pri cooked Indian delights.

ANTIQUES and old chandeliers waiting to be discovered at Segundo Place in one of Makati's Gamma St

Village'

The Columns offers living spaces in the lifestyle and business center that is Legazpi Village

...ings, a breathtaking view of Makati by night

...Unanguano delicacy which you can buy from one of the stalls.

Home of the Illuminati

One of the most popular land-marks in Legazpi Village is the Asian Institute of Management (AIM) at the corner of Paseo de Roxas and Legazpi Street.

Just across AIM is Greenbelt 3, which houses not only some of the country's most popular fast-food joints but also the Repertory Philippines, the Filipino theater company that produces contemporary Western plays, and trained world-class performers like Lea Salonga and Monique Wilson.

Contrasting beautifully with the vibrant atmosphere of the Makati Central Business District and hip ...ation is Sangpaan scattered in the ...ees are verdant parks with shady, ...ded trail ways, which are for the perfect place to contemplate or ...pass the afternoon away.

...ne in the midst of all these is the Ceferino Legazpi Village. The soon-to-be-completed two-tower, 41-story residential condominium at the corner of Arnaiz Avenue and Amorsolo Street seamlessly blends the trappings of true living and the convenience of living within a few steps from everything.

A brainchild of Community Innovations, a wholly owned subsidiary of Ayala Land, The Ceferino Legazpi Village is in close proximity to about 300 office buildings within the CBD, and to an array of lifestyle conveniences and businesses. It has generous recreational and city-club-like amenities such as the 600 sq. m Fitness Hub. It will...

Model units are available for viewing daily at 3/F, Glorietta 3, Ayala Center, 10 a.m.–9 p.m. sales office hours, 10 a.m.–10 p.m.

Drypers

New store on The Block

LIFESTYLE STORE OUR HOME HAS A NEW store at The Block in SM City North Edsa and the space is vibrant with furniture and home furnishings for students and professionals who are starting out on their own, or those who want to decorate their private space in their parents' home.

The good news is that there are, as they say style solutions to limited budgets and space, which are actually a lot of fun. Here are some tips from Our Home:

• It's always a humor when one item can have two functions; a futon or sofa bed is probably the most functional piece of furniture for a college student or young professional living in a small space. When the time to get to bed, the sofa opens up, converting the living room in to a bedroom. A bunk bed is another space saver.

• Create your own comfort zone in the den with plenty of pillows from Plump and Human. It's a fun and comfortable way for friends to sprawl and get cozy when hanging out. When not in use, the pillows can be piled up in a corner of the room or used to decorate a bed.

TIMBA extra-luxuriously pull-out day bed incorporates comfort and storage-space ideal for bedding, duvets and pillows.

• Choose furniture with multiples: A multifunctional center table that can be used for eating, studying, or even a late night poker game; stool-ottoman that can be easily tucked under console table; long sofas and cabinets that have added features and storage spaces; a dining set with a built-in lazy Susan. These pieces have a way of packing up considerably.

• Pick colors that are clean and bright, paints that pop and shapes that are playful for eye-catching rooms.

• Scented candles can only make delightful decor items, but also have aromatherapy effects. Eucalyptus or citrus can keep you awake when reviewing for exams or morning deadlines, while lavender and peppermint can lull you to sleep after a long and tiring day.

Our Home is located at 2/L of The Block in SM City North Edsa.

TWIZ brightly colored couches piece is specially designed to make a comfortable single bed and converts in seconds back to an attractively styled sofa.

Battery sale until Sept. 31

VISIT 6095 ELECTRONICS BOUTIQUE branch until Sept. 31 and get 24 pieces of Power Pack Alkaline AA/AAA Battery for P99.

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Also available at Electronics Boutique, among others, are the Panasonic 3-in-1 Emergency Light with a circular fluorescent bulb, for power interruptions. It can be recharged in two hours and has a low battery voice reminder.

Where customer vinyl cases will protect mobile phones and iPods against the cuts. The cases also have spaces for storing items like cash, credit cards and keys.

Also available are the Slimline Blood Pressure Monitor, Digital Grid Thermometer, and Mini-Compressor Nebulizer.

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ERTAINMENT

Lito Ernnie G. Velarde

A GP-rated Greta

Former 'ST Queen' is making sure her daughter gets to watch her comeback movies

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

IN ALL EARNESTNESS, COMEbacking star Gretchen Barretto insisted that she had asked permission not only from partner Tony Boy Cojuangco, but also from their 11-year-old daughter Dominique before accepting her current film assignments.

"I don't do anything without her approval. I wanted to avoid problems," she told Inquirer Entertainment in an interview held on the first shooting day of Joel Javier Reyes' horror trilogy "Manukan Ka sa Karma," Canary's entry to this year's Metro Manila Film Festival.

"Karma" is one of Gretchen's two "comeback" movies—the other is the Regal drama-comedy tentatively titled "Desperados," co-starring Baby Gutierrez, Gerald Anderson and Raja Fernandez.

"The horror movie is something Dominique can watch. It's something the entire family can watch because it's a festival movie. When my manager Roy Alvarado told me that it was for the MMFF, I knew that it would be the perfect comeback vehicle for me," she explained. "I want younger viewers to get to watch me. Let's face it, my old movies were for adults. I was once known as an 'S' Queen, remember?"

Not going wild

Before choosing domesticity 11 years ago, she was billed as the "Sex Trip Queen" in various sultry flicks produced by Imbo Films.

But that's a thing of the past, she said.

"That's why I'm asking Negal to fix the script of 'Desperados.' It's kinda sexy—a cross between 'Sex and the City' and 'Desperate Housewives.' On the movie's premiere night, I don't want my daughter to get embarrassed or 'Tong' to get mad at me."

She stressed: "I'm only playing my cards right. I don't want them to think of her that I'm going wild just because they allowed me

A GP-RATED G2

Two more graded 'B'

By Marinel R. Cruz

ABS CBNSCLOUD "TWILIGHT DANCERS" and Michael Sandejas' "Salad ng Dili" were graded "B" by the Cinema Evaluation Board (CEB), rating "excellent direction and well-written scripts" as reasons for the distinction.

The "B" grade entitles a movie to a 40 percent tax rebate, said CEB Chair Christine Bersola.

"Chiangkiu handled a very rich material with detachment and objectivity," Dayrit said of the film on male prostitution written by Ricky Lee. "For a gay movie, it's very upbeat. Its story also goes deeper than flesh trade by tackling other social issues."

Dayrit said "Twilight Dancers" would have gotten a higher grade were it not for its camera work, which "some board members found a little too grainy." But she said the board was "unanimous" in praising the performances of actors Cherry Pie Picache and Irma Cages.

Believable

"Twilight Dancers," which premiered in the recently concluded Toronto International Film Festival, stars Antoine Tyron Wren, Eric Manrique and Lazaro Nuevera.

"Salad ng Dili," the semi-biographical movie of rock band The Dawn, impressed the board with its "humanity" musical scoring and "believable" characters, said Dayrit.

"The film's style and approach in storytelling is also different and interesting. It's raw, innovative," the CEB chief added. "Actors Ping [Medina] and Rhyme [Tañamor] are especially outstanding."

Dayrit added: "For a Pinoy rock film, 'Salad ng Dili' is admirable for its honesty."

"Salad ng Dili," which follows the lives of the members of The Dawn in the last 20 years, was declared best picture at the concluding of the 2nd Cinemalaya Philippine Independent Film Festival in July. It also bagged the Best Editing and Best Sound awards.

GRETA meets up with another visiting celebrity, Miriam Quiambao, on the first shooting day of "Karma," in an antique store in Paco.

A GP-rated Greta

From page H1

to do movies. They might regret their decisions and they might tell me this I couldn't only accept my next movie 10 years from now! I'll love that. I want to act while I'm still young. I don't want to do grandmother roles!"

She made some acknowledgments too. It's for five weeks in the United States before plunging back into work.

"We were together, day in and day out. It was important for us to bond during. Everybody's summer vacation, because in the next few months, our lives would be totally different. I'll be constantly away shooting. That might take a lot of getting used to," Gretchen said.

Tony is more supportive of his estranged wife, she added. "He's wonderful for me."

On the morning of her first shooting day, he had a meeting, but still found the time to boost his confidence.

"He prayed that I'd act naturally. That I'd be calm and natural because, he said, I have the tendency to be hyper when I'm afraid."

Here, that is an understatement.

She's good. I couldn't sleep the night before. We usually call it a night as early as 8:30 p.m. because we wake up at 4:30 a.m. I personally try to go to sleep at 10 p.m. But last night, I was up until 3:30! My head was spinning."

To relax, she has had herself, being her vaudeville and make-up kit.

Ah, for sandcastle and makeup.

Shopping spree

In the US, she reportedly went on a spree, buying designer duds.

"No. I bought those fabulous clothes for 'Desperadoes.' For 'Karma,' my clothes are a lot simpler. I play a housewife, so viewers will see me in everyday clothes, slippers, shorts and tees," she clarified.

That's the same thing now for Tony and Dominique, it seems.

Since she gets up by three hours, Gretchen is also tired that her sense of fashion could be a tad flashy. "It depends on my mood.

At home, I sometimes get the urge to dress up because I don't get to go out that often. But there are also days when I'm just in jammies and T-shirt. I think I'm not normal in that respect," she mused, admitting that hearts Gets laughter.

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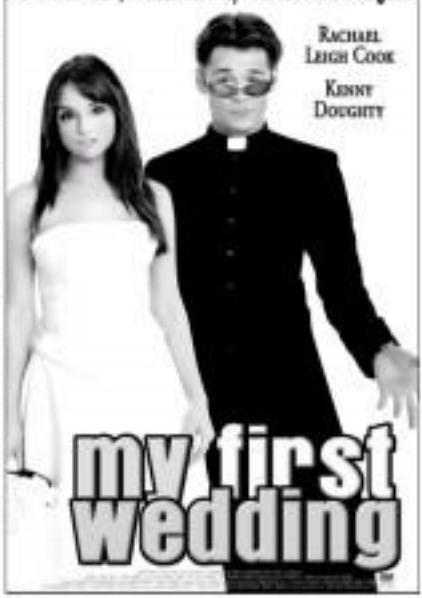

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THE WICKER MAN
8 YOU ARE THE ONE
9 THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA
10 CRANK

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3 STEP UP
4 MAXIMO OLIVEROS
CRANK
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SCOOP
6 THE BREED
7 YOU ARE THE ONE
8 YOU ARE THE ONE

METRO EAST

1 CRANK
2 JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
3 THE BREED
4 STEP UP
5 RESERVE
6 TWILIGHT DANCERS
7 DEAD OR ALIVE
8 YOU ARE THE ONE

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2 THE WICKER MAN
3 TWILIGHT DANCERS
4 CRANK

ANGELES

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2 STAY ALIVE
3 YOU ARE THE ONE
4 BASIC INSTINCT 2

IMUS

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2 YOU ARE THE ONE
3 TWILIGHT DANCERS
4 STAY ALIVE

STARMILLS

1 SCOOP
2 YOU ARE THE ONE
3 YOU, ME AND DUPREE
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6 CRANK

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MALL 5

1 YOU ARE THE ONE | 2 THE BREED | 3 DEAD OR ALIVE
4 TWILIGHT DANCERS | 5 THE WICKER MAN

Why the thrill is going, going...

NO TO MY, THE LEADING TALENT SHOWS on local TV show days..."Philippine Idol" and "Pinoy Dream Academy"—are not doing as well as expected.

"Idol's" main problem is the unreliability of its voice-texting process in choosing the last several finalists as by 12 finalists. So—one thing, no top male and female choices do not reflect the jurors' preferences.

Thus, there's the darkest possibility that talent and one potential may not decide the ultimate winners, but massive text-voting campaigns by contestants' relatives, friends and communities. What a disservice to Filipino talent that would be!

On "Academy" it's difficult for viewers to evaluate the finalists, because they are presented in bunches as they perform, and their solo portions are too brief to make a definitive impression.

And the daily coverage of the "scholars" in the Academy's house focuses, not so much on their talent, but more on their budding personal relationships. This further messes up the situation, and makes talent evaluation even more difficult.

As a result, the viewers is discouraged from taking the "talent" competition seriously, and simply assigns himself to leaving its outcome to the show's mentors and voters.

So, for both "Idol" and "Academy," the thrill is going...going...

Yes, not yet gone—but, if improvements aren't forthcoming soon, quickly growing dimmer.

'Today' show's example

FORTUNATELY, if the "Idol" people are interested, the "Today" program on the second largest cable channel recently showed how a show's production team can solve unexpected problems even before they become obvious to viewers. Was, unlike the recent "Idol" show where a busted mic wasn't replaced until many agonizing seconds had passed.

On the "Today" show we're citing, six young singers were competing for a slot in a Broadway musical, and the last contestant's mic suddenly went on the blink. But he was immediately given a substitute mic so that, when he sang, the sound was perfect.

Alas, this is far from what happened on "Idol," and the production ended up with egg on its face. Let's hope that it doesn't happen again, as the show's producers seem hopeless how to quickly and smartly solve the unexpected problems that are par for the course in live telecasts like the "Philippine Idol" show.

Feedback

A READER reacts to our comments on "Philippine Idol": "I agree with you, the top male singers didn't quite make it to the Top Four in the voting. Sham, Ramiro and Robert are indeed the most talented of the lot). However, the system followed is that way—the viewers choose, and they have their own reasons.

"For example, Mahwi and Jhanis don't have the star quality (but most Filipinos are attracted to. They may sing better than everyone else, but they don't have it.

Singing talent alone isn't enough to make you an Idol, as proven by 'American Idol.'

"It's not that I question the Filipino taste, but this contest may turn out to be another one of those popularity competitions like 'Pinoy Big Brother.'

"However, I also think the results turns out the way they did because of the judges. I know that's weird, but let the experts PICK. I don't think Fourmis Bi can distinguish a good singers from the bore singers—he isn't really a singer, he's more of a rapper.

"And Pilita Corrales can't say criticisms straight to the point. I know she doesn't want to be the bad girl, but someone has to give constructive criticism so that contestants can change their style early in the contest, and viewers can understand who is good enough, or just plain average.

"Second, not everyone votes—because it's quite expensive. (Noise calls cost P5 per, whereas majority of Idol contests in other countries only charge for text. Calls are still free. Also, some viewers don't know where to vote for because everyone seems good enough—this problem is the effect of the first point I raised..."

888 Fishing Place

THE 888 FISHING Place, bar and Restaurant in Binakayan, Kawit, Cavite, will stage its third anniversary show at 8 p.m. on Oct. 6 with Jhun Marquez (upholding, Call (046) 434-0022.

'A Public Affair'

JESSICA Simpson has released her fifth solo album, "A Public Affair." Purchase the album at any downtown and Amos Wan outlet and get passes to Austin's new movie, "Employee of the Month," on Oct. 6 at Eld Megamall Cinema 9.

'Hollywood Science'

ON TUESDAY, Sept. 26, National Geographic Channel's "Hollywood Science" show presents "Spy Gadgets." The episode investigates the technological reality behind Hollywood's most outrageous "inventions" for use in espionage films like the James Bond movie series.

GMA Network's Noel Bazaar

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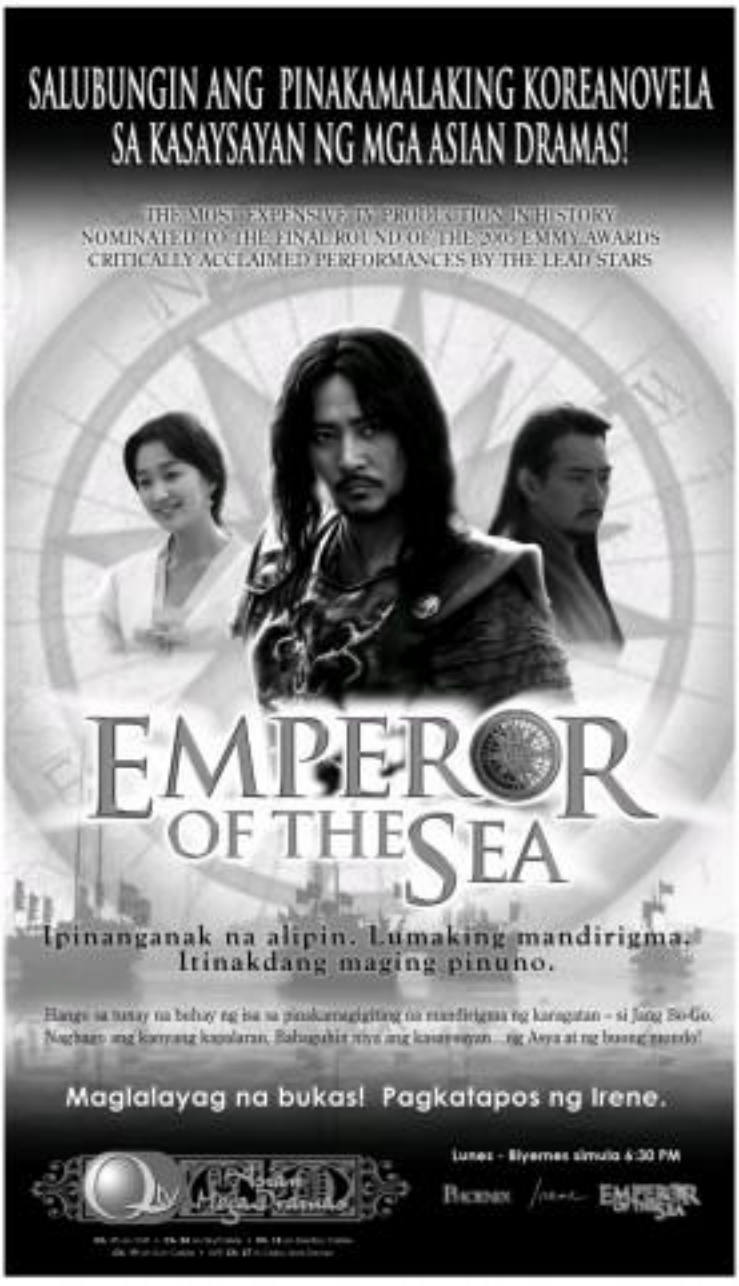
VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

Viewers are discouraged from taking 'talent' competitions seriously



Salamat sa Smart IDD, sinuwerte rin sa wakas!

Gemela Samco is a mother of four and wife to an Overseas Filipino Worker (OFW).

Like most women married to OFWs, the responsibility of raising the children and taking care of the household has fallen on Gemela's shoulders ever since her husband, Timoteo, left for work abroad in 1986.

"Sa totoo lang, miss na miss ko talaga siya," she says, referring to her husband of 20 years. "Pero inaalay ko ang lahat ng ito, okay na 'yun, okay na ako."

"Basta ang importante, may maipadala siya para kahit paano ay may pang-gastos ang mga bata habang nag-aaral. Kaya kahit mahirap, kinakaya ko."

Gemela swears that Smart IDD calls have become an integral part of her family life. All of her sons and even the one who just left for Kuwait are all loyal Smart subscribers.

Despite the difficulties and the loneliness posed by the physical separation from her husband, Gemela counts her blessings. "Swerte kami kasi mabait ang ama ng anak namin... Saka awa ng Diyos, wala namang masyadong problema. Sa pera lang talaga," she says.

Every now and then, Gemela joins text promos on television and the daily broadcasts because "baka sakaling swertehin."

When she did win a brand new jeepney in Smart's Pangkabuhayan promo, she could hardly believe her luck. "Sa wakas, sinuwerte rin! Isang taong ko lang sa Saudi, nanalo na! Maraming maraming salamat sa Smart!" she exclaims.

Gemela Samco in her brand new Smart Pangkabuhayan jeepney

Gemela with sons Michael, Noel with wife and son (seated), Angelo, Timoteo Jr., and OFW husband Timoteo (second from left)

Gemela Samco (2nd from left) and other winners from the Visayas region with Pangkabuhayan jeepneys (L-R) Rayzelle Mendoza (Iloilo), Gina Montilla (Iloilo), Gemela Samco (Iloilo), Jeffrey Ramos (Iloilo), Jeanette Ramos (Iloilo), Jeffrey Ramos (Iloilo), Jeanette Ramos (Iloilo), Jeffrey Ramos (Iloilo), Jeanette Ramos (Iloilo)

The Samcos are lucky recipients of the Smart Pangkabuhayan Promo. This livelihood program of Smart allows all hardworking Filipinos a chance to become entrepreneurs and savor the fruits of their labor.

Now, Timmy can't wait to visit home and share the joys of this with his wife. "Masayang-masaya talaga siya. Sabi niya ng minsan na, nanaginip na daw siya na siya yung nagda-drive. Malagot na ng pinagdasal 'to!" she says.

Gemela now dreams of going on a family vacation once they have saved enough from their newest source of income. "Dagdag income talaga 'yun para sa amin, saka makakapasyal na kami ng asawa ko. Maraming maraming salamat talaga sa Smart!"

Gemela Samco, one of the lucky Grand Draw Winners in the Smart Pangkabuhayan Promo

GMA Winners

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Bella Galeria – Tricycle
Dolores De Guzman – Tricycle
Rowena Dingcay – Goods Worth P50,000

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Rowena Sencino
Jessen M. Mendoza
Ignacio Sencio
Raquel Bio
Dimitri Asilonzon
Loverey Nobilo
Marites A. Purificio
Emilio E. Dizo
Mabrahim Arca
Rexonilla Pinson
Marylene A. Tomas
Leon Garino
Carmelita Cavalida

Luzon Winners

Geraldine Silvestre – Jaspney
Teresita Gonzales – Tricycle
Peter Custodio – Tricycle
Marites Portugal – Goods Worth P50,000

LUZON ILOILO WINNERS

Merlie Sumalinog
Michael Moreno
Lucas Tenio
Alexander N. Solomayo
Jonathan B. Flores
Pilar Lozano
Erlinda R. Palongpa
Catherine P. Mauleto
Lorena F. Cano
Jovanni I. Inocencio
Ma. Josiela Bono
Shennin Deya
Gerlyn M. Lanaman
Cristina D. Bajao
Rosalina G. Ranoncng

Visayas Winners

Gemela Samco – Jaspney
Daisy Marie Enrico – Tricycle
Cresita Rivera – Tricycle
Joanah R. Ramirez – Goods Worth P50,000

VISAYAS ILOILO WINNERS

Fatima Cuaso
Rebbonne Villejo
Myra A. Abut
Mary Grace G. Bendino
Merlin LU Tulod
Analiza S. Dealde
Rosenna Reyloves
Julie Ann S. Nevosi
Katherine Yee
Marivic Galvez

Mindanao Winners

Judith L. Sandhan – Asuncion
Mary Ann Penaranga – Tricycle
Rochelle Dorias – Tricycle
Mary Ranay – Goods Worth P50,000

MINDANAO ILOILO WINNERS

Yvonne G. Galera
Vilma Sencino
Liberin S. Fayus
Rebecca Karen
Vanny Sencio
Arlene Molino
Aracon V. Umaagos
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"BTUM" stars Angelika dela Cruz and Sarah Geronimo in thanksgiving concert.

Big live concert for series finale

DIMA "Lavidia" looks in awe.

AS DORINA PINEDA AND Lavilla Arguelles in ABS-CBN's "Bituing Walang Ningning," Sarah Geronimo and Angelika dela Cruz dueled in the "Clash of the Divas Grand Showdown," filmed for the series finale.

Right after the network held a "thanksgiving" concert in tandem with JollibeeTM, featuring the lead stars on Sunday. Apart from Sarah, the list includes Gary Valenciano, Mark Bautista and Aga Muhlach.

Stories on stars Zsazsa Padilla and Ai-Ai de las Alas also presented special production numbers.

Sarah was "very happy." Speaking in Filipino, the singing star said, "I have always been proud to be a member of the Jollibee family, especially when I learned it was supporting 'Bituing Walang Ningning.' I'd like to thank all the people who have been following the story of Dorina Pineda-night after night."

MMTA

METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE

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Jenna Dewan star of "TAKE THE LEAD"

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Will the Famas show go on?

Target date is November; five venues are being considered

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

"YES, THE FAMAS SHOW WILL PUSH through," asserted Art Pedro, president of the Filipino Academy of Movie Arts and Sciences.

Pedro said the Court of Appeals denied on Aug. 31 the "writ of injunctive relief" filed by Jimmy Tio, a Manila politician and head of a rival Famas faction, against him and Arsenio Esguerra, presiding judge of the Regional Trial Court of Manila.

Pedro recounted that Esguerra had earlier ruled in his favor, dismissing Tio's appeal that "he be restrained from representing himself as Famas president" on July 11.

Pedro recalled that Tio had also filed a Temporary Restraining Order to prevent the Famas' camp from staging the awards show on the UP Theater on July 15.

Pedro said Adda Leong, presiding judge of Branch 46 of RTC Manila, also dismissed Tio's TRO appeal on Sept. 15.

"Tio failed to mention that he had applied for a TRO on March 8, which Judge Esguerra denied. He applied for another TRO on the last minute to stop the July 15 show. This is a case of forum-shopping," Pedro said.

He said he had also filed a "forum shopping" case against Tio and a disbarment complaint against Tio's counsel, Antonio Bautista, on the foregrounded ban of the Philippines.

Rigged election?

In a phone interview with Inquirer Entertainment, Tio countered, "I didn't engage in forum-shopping. I filed the first TRO on a personal capacity (for reasons, in my capacity as Famas president)."

The event name were sparked by Tio's "defeat" in the Famas election in 2004, said Pedro. Tio argued that the election had been rigged.

Established in 1952, Famas is the country's oldest awards-giving body. Both Pedro and Tio insisted that they were pursuing their quest for "the good of the Famas."

"We are pursuing our appeal through the proper legal channels. We just want to stop Pedro from using Famas for his personal gain," Tio said.

"Before I came in there were rumors of vote-buying and payola. The group was on the verge of breaking up. I entered the dissolving process," Pedro asserted.

He said that the Famas ceremony would push through in November.

"We are considering five possible venues: UP Theater, UP Cine Adarna, AFP Theater, FEU auditorium and Pope Pius Theater," he said.

COMING SOON

DISCOVER THE SECRETS FROM THE ANCIENT BOOK OF LOVE

KAMA SUTRA 3

Love Potion

THE DEVIL IS COMING ON SEPT. 27

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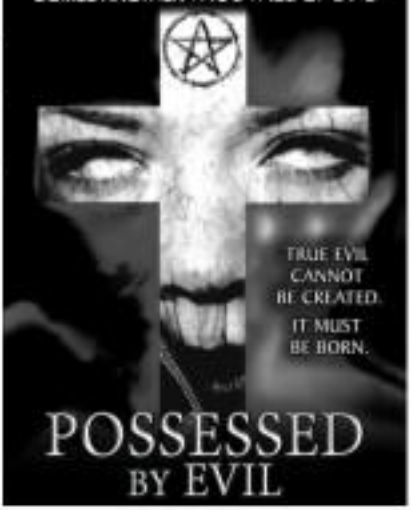

TRUE EVIL CANNOT BE CREATED. IT MUST BE BORN.

POSSESSED BY EVIL

Bigfoot picks chair of script committee for financing pledge

By Marinel R. Cruz

THE PRODUCTION HEAD OF THE BIGFOOT unit for movie "Catch Me If You Can" would be on the committee tasked to choose the films that would receive investment from Bigfoot Entertainment, the Cebu-based Hollywood production outfit announced on Thursday.

Through a partnership with the Film Development Council of the Philippines (FDCP), Bigfoot Entertainment has pledged to finance or co-produce films with "Filipino content and English script" for as much as $100,000 to $2 million.

Thom Sinden, who worked on DreamWorks Productions projects like "Catch Me If You Can," "The Ring," "Head of State," "Forty," "Biker Boyz" and "Stomp the Yard and Fly," will head the five-member panel.

Bigfoot started the production unit 18 years ago, producing independent low-budget documentaries. Its backing of the award-winning "Exploring from the Inside," which documented the 1999 Texas A&M University bonfire tragedy that killed 12 students.

A "first of its kind" co-financing developed to define the working parameters between FDCP and Bigfoot for finding the right films, but scripts can be directly sent to the Bigfoot offices.

Music videos, too

The pledged fund was not limited to movies and could also be used for music videos and documentaries, said Bigfoot.

In charge of the Fund is Bigfoot Partners, the company's film financing division.

According to FDCP Vice Chair Christian Dapsil, there is no limit to the number of films that the Hollywood firm wants to finance or co-produce. "It means Filipino stories that can be shot in tourist spots here, meaning, those that will showcase the beauty of the country," she added.

Sinden is a graduate of the University of Southern California's Peter Stark Producing Program. He has worked in New Line Cinema's story department, analyzing scripts and advising top executives on potential film investments.

In 2003, he secured settlement producer Bob Cooper at the newly formed Lionhaze Entertainment and worked on films like Joe Roseboro's "Sleepover" and Craig Ellenport's "Mr. Woodcock." Dapsil also worked as casting director and production coordinator on the indie feature "Think Tank."

Dapsil came to Bigfoot Entertainment in 2004 as a writing assistant and was promoted to Director of Creative Development in March 2005.

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Regine Velasquez celebrates 20 years in show business

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SHOW TIME

REGINE VELASQUEZ-RAMOS has upcoming 20th anniversary as show business with a concert at the Araneta Coliseum on Oct. 13 and 14 titled, "20."

Says Regine, "It's a concert for the fans who have been with me for the last two decades. I will sing songs that are memorable, not only to me but also to my supporters."

Call 426-7311.

Tavern turns 4

Lucky diners at the Tavern until Sept. 28 could be among the lucky 300 guests invited to a night of singing and partying on Thursday to celebrate its 4th anniversary at Greenbelt 3.

Featured performer is SRO, with special guests Luana Padilla, Tyxie Tomas, Side A Band, Randy Santiago, Gary V, Shamrock Cinema and a lot more.

Tavern on the Square is located at the 2nd level of Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center, Makati.

Voices at Manila Hotel

ENJOY A 7-p.m. at the Manila Hotel's Panay Penthut Grand Ballroom, some of the country's best artists will come to gether for a good cause, taking the stage for "Voices."

Dulce, Fey Yi chin, Ivay Al parcon and Robert Seña will sing standard, broadway and contemporary hits, plus OPM classics. Joining them are the "Hall Stars" Singing Priests Norberto Gonzaga, Melvin Bolino and Franklin Tandingan from the Diocese of Urdaneta.

Proceeds will go to Silakbo ng Dibdib Foundation Inc. Call 521-1701 or 521-1482.

ISAFF ARAGNE, DULCE, fey Yi chin and Robert Seña

Dave's first

Some of the hottest concert performers join Dave in his first major solo concert on Sept. 29 at Bagtikan, Roxas Boulevard.

Titled "Dave: Ball All Over Again," the show features Dave and his fellow TWO Dynamic subvoices...92.3nr hip-hop artist Kasper, soulful pinoy pop singer Ted Rodriguez and Dominic band group with guests Ernesto Cruz, "Pinoy Pop Superstar" runners-up Alville Santos and Ferdi Vega.

Flamenco concert

International flamenco artist Clara Romero and her dancers will hold a concert on Sept. 26, 7:30 p.m. at Spotlight, The Peninsula Manila. The repertoire consists of a few dance titled, "Fandangos de Huelva", "La Falda Breve," a classical Spanish solo with castanets; "Guajira por Bulerias" duet; "Tarantos" duet; "Tientos" duet, a fusion of Spanish, oriental and Arabic influences and a solo en tacones, a deep song. Other numbers include Manuel de Falla piano solos and flamenco pieces by the Sevilla Guitar group. Call 2070; 552-3789. Spotlight is located on Don Chino Roces Ave. Ext. corner Edsa, Makati City.

CLARA Romero

Today

DJ Aneza at the Manila Zoo for an afternoon of chill and party music.

Sept. 25

Eraserheads and **Dave Concio** at **Mogen Bar**. Call 637-4080.

The Ambassadors at **'70s Bistro**, Scout, QC.

Silk and **Soul** at **Mark's Greenbelt 3**

Tropical Depression at **Tavern on the Square**, Greenbelt 3.

Sept. 26

Jeremiah and **Marbie** at **Mogen Bar**. Call 637-4080.

Noel Cabangon at **'70s Bistro**, Scout, QC.

Kotha and **The Smiled Out Band** at **Mark's Greenbelt 3**

SRO at **Tavern on the Square**, Greenbelt 3

Sept. 27

The Members and **Zyncronize** at **Mogen Bar**. Call 637-4080.

Jedhaya and **Kahoy** at **'70s Bistro**, Scout, QC.

ROBERT Devereux, Helen Mirren and Jeremy Irons in "Elizabeth I"

'Elizabeth': Royal pains & pleasures

By Oliver M. Palomar II
Contributor

THE MESMERIZING MINISERIES "ELIZABETH I" provides a thorough and layered chronicling of the reign of England's famed "Virgin Queen," whose decades-long governance was studded with hard-won victories and, apparently, personal heartaches.

What we don't see in history books or the stiffly solemn portraits in her very human side—her private thoughts, frailties, virtues, and surprisingly her wry sense of humor.

REVIEW

Queen Elizabeth I, as she (revealing period piece) began stepping, governed her land as decisively as she could, but some decisions often took a toll on her well-being.

The wonderful Helen Mirren wonderfully gives soul and humanity to the historical figure, who was promoted, as a certain point during her rule, into shooting soprano that would help produce an heir to continue her family's royal lineage. She clearly announces to her (suited yourself from the outset that she has no desire whatsoever to bear a child, but yields to their orders after much deliberation, anyway.

Conspirators

Choosing the proper men, however, is a difficult task. It is for one of the challenges that the beleaguered queen must face; aside from that, she has to rout out conspirators who threaten the throne, while keeping at bay the consequences of an unusually fiery friendship with confidant Robert Dudley, the Earl of Leicester (Jeremy Irons).

The two-parter goes into her development as queen during a few distinct periods of personal turmoil, as well as her growth into a ruler that connects with, and binds the nation in several successful conflicts against neighboring territories. She knows her politics well and is keenly aware of the power she wields, although there are instances where some judgments are considered rash by her occasionally puzzled advisers, including the loyal Lord Burghley (Jim Shilliamsuk). She is not, nevertheless, a speechless over her more emotionally clouded declarations, especially on matters that fostered Dudley's support, the lavish, handsome Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex (Hugh Dancy).

Resplendent

"Elizabeth I" re-creates a resplendent atmosphere of the bygone era, albeit with some narrative embellishments that complement the historical backbone of the queen's story. Set mostly in the late 1500s, the culturally alive environs of England have a coastal hand in shaping Elizabeth, as much as the door to shaping them in the midst of religious strife and economic upheavals.

Directed by Tom Hooper and written with an eye for strong characterization by Nigel Williams, "Elizabeth I" dissects the powerful woman's motives and political breadth, and to some degree, her understandably guarded more-emotional repressions.

It's not surprising that Mirren gives her an equally strong presence and voice, and dominating pulchritude beyond the jewel-decked corsets and outlandish headdresses. The aging queen is written as imperfect but appreciable, but she can be intimidating and capable of violence ruthlessly when spurned.

Awe-inspiring

Still, she keeps her occasional wailing and wretched love life confined to the more restricted zones of her palace. She's an intelligent and awe-inspiring politician, as she proves by getting all an elevated stage during an outdoor campaign, to mingle and directly speak with her people. "I know I have the body but of a weak and feeble woman," she tells them spiritedly, "but I have the heart and stomach of a king! And of a king of England, too!"

"Elizabeth I" premieres tonight at 8 on the Hallmark Channel.

A SCENE from "Batak Sa Puong Puday": This movie could make it to European arthouse cinemas by virtue of its story. But author says digital video "un-lovely spoiled" some beautiful shots of the two actors.

The downside of digital

German media critic plays devil's advocate

By Tilman Baumgärtel
Contributor

THE INTRODUCTION OF Affordable digital video cameras and the prospect of making films inexpensively and independent of big studio have stirred up a lot of excitement in the Philippine film community. Whereas traditional filmmaking requires huge investments in film stock alone, digital movie making—which accounts for 40 percent of last years local production—is possible for a fraction of the usual production budgets. Therefore many Filipino filmmakers have, by themselves or with the support of the several Cinemalaya festival in the upcoming Cinemalaya competition, started making movies without relying on the resources of mainstream production companies. Some of their output, "Ang Pag-ibadalgan ni Maximo Oliveros," in particular, have staged critical acclaim here and abroad.

Many of these filmmakers are seen as a way out of the local film industry's usual lust of often formulaic productions. Many filmmakers, critics and fans anticipate a third "Golden Age" of Philippine cinema, with cineastes taking on new and unusual subject matters that big studios would rather not touch. They hope that fresh narrative strategies and innovative ways of storytelling will breathe new life into the industry, which is currently in dire straits because of the dominance of American blockbusters and the curse of DVD piracy.

I am about to play the spoilsport here, or the devil's advocate. I will argue that digital movie making is not magic pixie dust, and might actually be bad for Philippine cinema. To convince in the current euphoria over digital movies, I will point out some of their shortcomings.

I understand perfectly well how important it is for Filipino filmmakers to find a cheaper way to make movies. And I was impressed by the variety and quality of the last batch of Cinemalaya entries. Nevertheless, I'd like to offer a dissenting opinion that I hope would be taken as constructive criticism.

Here, David Lowenstein, style, are 10 Reasons Why Digital Filmmaking is Bad for Philippine Cinema:

10) Digital just don't look as good as 35 millimeter.

Despite arguments to the contrary that's just how it is, period.

9) Digital makes it too easy.

The fact that traditional film is an expensive medium has made many directors adhere to strict budgets. A lot of good and even popular films have been made with little money. Consider "The Bicycle Thief" in "Rashomon," "Psycho" or "Changking Express." Manuel Conde's "Genghis Khan" is also a great example—a local film with a low budget, but high impact on the viewers to this very day, simply because Conde intentionally knew where to put his camera, at present, many film industries in the region, including South Korea, thrive precisely on this economy of means.

Many local digital movies shows a tendency to lack that strict discipline that makes them dull and dragging. Many of the familiar weaknesses of Philippine films are made worse in digital movies. The director often relies too much on dialogue to tell the story, instead of working on the visual aspects of film. These films also make easy for clumsy melodrama—actresses who look like models, sub unconvincible; twenty men in underwear shout hysterically; there are endless, tearful discussions and other big matches; gloomy tragedy and tireless end drama rule.

8) Digital encourages sloppiness.

Movies such as the otherwise exciting "Batanda" delight in constant violations of the line of action and other basic rules of filmmaking. This happened accidentally, but it was painted out by veteran director Marilou Diaz-Abaya during the last Cinemalaya conference. While I do not mind violations of the rules taught in film school, I'd like to see good reasons when filmmakers ignore them. Or, in many of the current digital movies, the camera moves all over the place instead of being positioned in such a way that the viewer easily understands spatial relations in a given scene.

7) Digital breeds its own mannerisms.

Many digital cameras are usually small and easy to carry, so many digital cinematographers have chosen to shoot in a quirky, fidgety fashion. The handheld camera is the all the rage, allowing for shaky shots and super-quick pans and tilts, which are then linked together by jump cuts. While these is nothing essentially wrong with that, it has become a mannerism that gives many of these movies a uniform look. Filmmakers who use such techniques should be reminded that a lot of the Nouvelle Vague and Oliver Cinema films from the '60s, which were shot with 16-mm cameras, employed similar methods. Today, they all look contrived.

On the other end of the spectrum of digital mannerisms are endless, self-indulgent long takes or unflowing tracking shots. While I like a good long take or elegant tracking shot, the picture quality of most digital movies simply does not allow for that (yet). Digital video images are unbearably flat. They do not provide the depth of field of the old celluloid film stock that made the long takes in the works of Orson Welles or Jean Renoir so breathtaking. This may change soon however.

6) Digital could lower the audience's audio-visual standards.

Most Filipinos are exposed to terrible audio-visual entertainment. I am not talking about the artistic value of movies, television shows etc., but about their visual quality. Many cinemas have second-rate projectors and insufficient sound systems, because the audience is uninterested in the projection and sound quality. Many of these movies are shown in cinemas with second-rate projectors and insufficient sound systems, because the audience is uninterested in the projection and sound quality. Many cinemas have

GMA Films announces film project with Mega

By Nicl Valera

A HORROR MOVIE starring Sharon Cuneta is the next project of GMA Films, according to the film studio's president, Annette Abrogar.

In an exclusive interview with Inquirer Entertainment last week, Abrogar said Cuneta was also interested in co-production ventures with GMA Films.

"We don't have anything signed yet," Abrogar admitted. "But we're sure this deal would push through," knowing Shayne."

The actress, who has been dubbing in movie co-productions lately, has embarked on similar ventures with United Pictures, the latter of which is "Las Vegas Lolas," starring Robin Padilla.

Abrogar said Cuneta's first movie with GMA Films would be shot in HD (high definition) format.

"We're doing this for the special effects," Abrogar said. "It [movie] needs only for a lot of special effects."

She said shooting might start in October.

Mega says

In a text message to Inquirer Entertainment, the actress confirmed that nothing has been set on paper. "It would be nice to work with GMA Films," Sharon said. But, she had to meet with Abrogar so she can see the script and decide if she likes it ... and then "Ke my suddenly out of whack schedule."

GMA Films will also release next month "Till I Met You," a co-prod with Viva Films. The movie, starring Robin Padilla and Regine Velasquez, will be shown nationwide in more than 100 cinemas on Oct. 11.

"Till I Met You" reunites the screen tandem of Robin and Regine, whose last movie together was the 2000 hit "Sukiangan Ko'y Dasa," produced by Viva Films.

ROUNDUP

'Maximo' remastered

"DA VINCI'S Lost Code"

"2001: PATADALIGA NI HUDHUD (Hudhud)," the country's official entry to the 2001 Oscars in February, is back in local theaters, simultaneous with its commercial exhibition in New York, LA and San Francisco.

The celebrated digital film directed by Ramon Zurbo and starring Nathan Lopez has been remastered by United Pictures and Optima Digital and is now shown in 35 mm film format for an even more enhanced viewing experience.

The indie digital movie that reaped a harvest of local and international film awards last year was produced by Raymond Lee and Melinda Tanaseno for ala Films and is being released locally and internationally by Unico Entertainment, the distribution arm of United Pictures.

'Da Vinci's Lost Code'

The Discovery Channel takes viewers inside a world where science and art collide to break a code and reveal who painted the "lost" masterpiece in "Da Vinci's Lost Code," a two-hour special that premieres tonight at 9.

The previously unidentified Leonardo da Vinci painting "The Infanta Claire and St. John Embracing" has been in private hands for centuries and two of the world's leading da Vinci experts have identified it as being Leonardo's design.

In an effort to explore the painting's secrets, viewers will see this lost code unlocked in a series of scientific tests, including infrared reflectography, CAT scans, microscopic investigations and fingerprint analysis.

Bantay Kalikasan drive

Today, DZMM and the series cycling community joins "Sheikhrahan Para Sa Mahina Na Tubig," a five-lifted bike run around the streets of Metro Manila.

The activity, which is part of Bantay Kalikasan's campaign "Earth, Environment, Awareness Reminder Tomorrow's Hope," is designed to create awareness to protect the La Mesa Dam, and to raise the need to free the environment from pollution.

Registrations is at the United Cyclists Association of the Philippines office at No. 34 Tilting St., Sikhs Subdivision, Novaliches, Quezon City. Assembly time is between 6 to 7 a.m.

'Gary V @ 35'

Gary Valenciano's 23rd anniversary concert "Gary V @ 35" at the Music Museum airs as a two-hour special tonight on ABS-CBN.

The show's highlights include high-energy numbers from Gary, Jason Jarocon of the Masseuses, Gerardo Espar of G-Force, Mica Nyhton of Antioc and Gary's son Gabriel.

Christian Bautista, Mark Bautista and Jericho Rosales from part of the celebration.

New game show

"Pwenyo sa Swelte" (TBE), the nationwide text-based traffic program of the Bureau of Internal Revenue and Pagcor, will have a daily TV game show called "Kwentuhan Pwenyo sa Swelte" at 9:15 p.m. on ABS-4.

This will allow P500 winner to be a player in the free game show where P1 million is at stake.

CARTV

In the game show, four P10 coutes will be drawn and asked to participate to be eliminated round. Each successive automatically receives P1,000. The player who answers on the final round gets a chance to win from P5,000 to P1 million in an exciting cash game.

Hosting it actress-singer Maria Teresa C. Zarate.

TERESA Garcia

Miss Petite RP

The search is on for the 2007 Miss Petite Philippines who will represent the country in the 2007 Miss Petite International Pageant to be held in Texas, USA on July next year.

The pageant is open to ladies between 16 to 27 years old, below 5'3" in height, and willing to travel abroad to compete in the international contest to be held in USA.

The local and international petite pageants seek to search for adorable "spokesmodels" and image models of petite beauties.

Entry forms are available at CHE 320 Tomas Morato Extension Quezon City and at the secretariat of the International Pageants Philippines Inc. (IPPH), 110 Remaining Road, Brgy. Batasan Hills, Quezon City. Call Carole Aquino at 9883177.

'Conquest' finalists

Competition heats up on branch competition as "Conquest" presents its 10 finalists on the stage, one to be the ultimate contender and will be launched in a new progressive era.

Dubbed as "Bagong Sigaw ng Bayan," "Conquest" is a TV reality search at GMA-7 from 11 a.m. to 12 noon on weekdays and 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Saturdays.

The 10 contestants who have passed the voting and selection process are Gil Nicolas, Jim Ayessa, Shanel Marquez, Vince Santos, Myrtle, Mitch Fernandez, Billy Joel Bartolome, Dene Rosses, Harrel Gross and Wish Sue Hale.

We details, log on to www.chronicle.conquest.blogspot.com.

Anti-piracy tool

LOS ANGELES—Tom viner, Hollywood's really but gone to the dogs.

The Motion Picture Association of America on Thursday unveiled a new tool in the war on movie piracy: a pair of DVD-sniffing Labrador Retrievers named Lucky and Flo.

The MPAA, which represents the major US movie studios in government and legal affairs, claims the illegal copying of movies and television shows cost studios and other media ever there more than $6.1 billion in lost revenues in 2005.

The job for Lucky and Flo will be to sniff out optical discs in luggage or other containers, and stop the discs from getting to manufacturing plants where they can be reproduced.

Reuters

'Frankenstein' on DVD

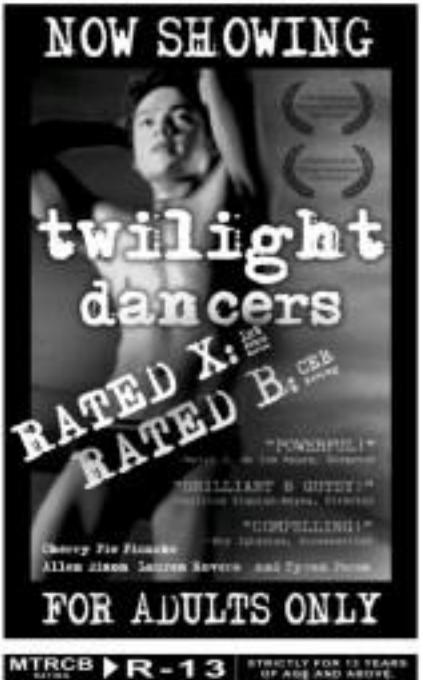
LOS ANGELES—On Tuesday, Universal is unveiling the DVD "Frankenstein—75th Anniversary Edition" which includes the new digitally remastered movie, a biography of star Boris Karloff, plus featurettes, including one about the film's makeup.

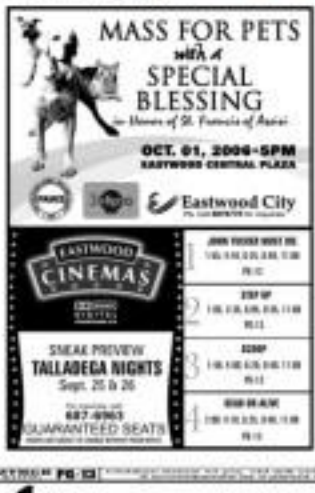
Universal is giving the same treatment to "Dracula," which was also released in 1931. But no horror picture quite captured the sustained and stylish of Whale's "Frankenstein."

"It's one of those iconic films that had a lot of influence," commentator Rob Zombie, a University of Southern California professor specializing in horror films of the 1930s and '40s. "It really established the horror film as one of the most potent genres in Hollywood."

Frankenstein's monster reboot to the, appearing in scores of American and British films, ranging from the outright scary to comedies such as "Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein" and Mel Brooks' "Young Frankenstein."

AP





Fil-Am producer Dean Devlin soars with 'Flyboys'

JAMES Franco as a pilot in the entertaining action-drama "Flyboys," produced by Fil-Am Dean Devlin

James Franco and Jennifer Decker have a chaste romance in the movie.

He says it took him six years to finish the movie, insisting on making it an indie, under his own terms and for his own production company

LOS ANGELES—FILIPINO-AMERICAN producer Dean Devlin, on pethaps one of the biggest nights of his life—the premiere screening Wednesday of his action-adventure movie "Flyboys"—decided to stand outside the theater doors after he made his remarks before an excited audience and the lights went dark for the movie.

"I must have seen the movie a million times," Dean later told me as the after-screening party at the lobby of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences building in Beverly Hills. It took Dean six years to get "Flyboys" in this premiere night. His mother, Pilar Soriano, an interesting Filipino actress in Hollywood (she was born Rita Hernandez in the Philippines), passed away in 2001.

The producer of such blockbusters as "Independence Day" and "The Patriot" struggled to come up with a production deal that allowed him to make "Flyboys" on his terms and his own company, Electric Entertainment. The result is a $60 million film based on the true story of the Lafayette Escadrille, the squad of American pilots who volunteered to fly and die during missions for the French Army in World War I. With a cast led by James Franco, who finally got a stand-do-anyself star vehicle, "Flyboys" features exciting aerial dogfights as these young men use their newly-invented, dangerously imperfect aircraft which were being improved by their enemies.

Tucked in between the action scenes is a love story between James' character and a young French woman, played by the pretty Jennifer Decker.

Dean introduced me to his wife, actress Lisa Ermacora, whom he met on the set of The Mel Gibson hit, "The Patriot." Pilipino I asked Dean for an interview, the busy, bespectacled former actor said sure, name the place, and he'll be there. But with a my deadline looming as large as "Godzilla" (one of his movies), I opted for an e-mail interview.

Director Tony Bill's introduction of the movie at the premiere last night spoke about how "radical, dangerous" this film is.

Tony, of course, was being sarcastic. As a film of never ending movie-montages—not by the major studios, it's "radical" that filmmakers are allowed to make the film the way they want. It was a fantastic experience making this film independently and making it with Tony Bill.

How different was the last night's premiere from your other movie premieres?

There was a wonderful feeling at the premiere. So often in Hollywood, people tell you as the premiere here sneak they liked your film but you can tell that they're just being nice. The genuine enthusiasm of the crowd was raw and exhilarating.

This movie should finally make James Franco a big, bona fide star. Did you meet resistance to casting him?

James Franco has been known for sometime as a brilliant actor but he has, for the most part, avoided doing the kind of "dumb movies" that turn most young actors into "celebrities." Since we were doing the film independently, we could cast who we wanted. We could hand him roles. First, find the best actors available and casual, cast actors who were right for the roles. We worried that James might be too big of a star and too expensive for us, but luckily he really responded to the material and came on board.

Did you get to talk to James about his experience filming "The Great Raid"?

James knew that my ancestors came from the Philippines so he shared many stories with me about his experience filming "The Great Raid." I'm glad it was a good experience for him.

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD
Rudeen V. Nepomuceno

David Hilmore negates himself as a very capable actor in this movie. This should shoot down the unfair writeups that he got the role because he and his father (Oracle Corp. CEO Larry Ellison) were investors in the movie.

David's performance speaks for itself. And the truth is, Tony had no big him to be in the film. The late thing David wanted to do was to act in a film he invested in. But David is a real, world-renowned acrobatic pilot. Tony wanted the realism that only David could bring to the part.

You are presenting by coming up with a $60 million worth independent movie. An indie film becomes more popular, is that the way to go?

For me, I prefer to work independently after all the films I've made in my career, it's nice to not justify my ideas and techniques and just concentrate on the filmmaking process.

I remembered a reaction from Filipino writer Ophelia Sin Juan about your production. She brought up Filipino Veteran Claudio, who fought with the American army in France during World War I.

I had not heard about Tomas Claudio, and that goes to argue her [Ophelia's] point that it's a story worth telling.

What was your most nerve-wracking experience while producing "Flyboys"?

Everything. Without a studio behind you, you have to do everything you will, from financing, business affairs, production, post-production, marketing to publicity—you name it. It's incredibly nerve-wracking to have that much responsibility on your shoulders. However, it's also incredibly rewarding when you finish.

There must have been an unnerving side to your adventure in getting this movie made.

Maybe I'll look back in 10 years and find it amusing. Right now, I'm so relieved to have just gotten through it. I feel like I made it through a gigantic, uphill battle. Ask me this again a year from now.

You are only 44 but you are often described as a "veteran" in the business.

It's nice to finally be a vet. It's like counting Sergeant Stripes.

What was the most important thing you learned from working with Tony Bill?

So often in Hollywood, they would prefer to work with some young movie video director over a seasoned pro. For me, I'll take the seasoned pro anytime. Working with Tony was a real joy. You didn't have to go through any kind of "training" process. It was a wonderful partnership.

FIL-AM producer Dean Devlin and director Tony Bill on the set.

I read that you gave back the money Pete gave you to research the possibility of a sequel to "Independence Day."

"Independence Day" was, stylistically, based on the disaster movies of the 1970s. And as you know, there was never a good sequel to a disaster movie. There's a reason for that. When you do a sequel to that kind of movie, you never get over the coincidence that the disaster happens again, to the same people. At the end of the day, Roland (Emmerich, his director) and I felt that we really owed something to the people who supported us and supported the film. We didn't want to hand in a sub-par sequel just for the money.

What about sequels to "Stargate"? Have you spoken to Kurt Russell and James Spader about reprising their roles?

I haven't spoken to them in years, but the last time I spoke with them about a sequel, they were up for it. I hope they still are. It would be great to finally finish telling the story we set out to tell 13 years ago.

Will be working again with Roland Emmerich on "Indust"?

Roland and I wrote the draft of the script many years ago. That's the source of his involvement in the new film. Roland and I had a wonderful partnership that lasted 12 years. I cherish those years. But at some point, Roland decided that he wanted to be a director and not run a big company. He certainly had earned the right. So I moved on to start my own company. Roland remains one of my closest friends. I'm sure we'll work together on something in the future.

What about your plans to direct?

I plan on shooting "Clearing" next summer. It will be a lot of fun.

There was an online piece about your rumored reaction to the use of actual footage of "Godzilla" in, of all things, a Pontiac design TV commercial.

Everyone got his own version of "I burned the flesh." And I guess "Godzilla" is mine. It was very strange to see my Godzilla show up in the Pontiac design TV commercial. I'm not sure why they chose us for that.

You were one of the first figures in Hollywood to declare Mel Gibson for his alleged anti-Semitic remarks when he was arrested for drunk driving in Malibu last July.

Mel Gibson is one of my dear, dear friends. I know his heart. He is an incredibly decent and caring person. Some people, when they get drunk, reveal who they truly are. Others can even someone else altogether. That's Mel. When he drinks, he becomes another person. I've been with him in the past and it can be pretty. But he apologized to me and to many others. I'm sure, to the end, that this will be very helpful in him recovering.

With the passing of your Filipino mother, is it harder to maintain your links to your Filipino heritage?

My two aunts live here in Los Angeles and we're very close.

Since you are a producer, have helpful is it to have an actress-wife who understands the business?

Because my wife and I are both in the business, we're very understanding of the time and energy it takes to do this kind of work. Because of that, we're both very grateful when it comes to the work that each of us do.

I'm a lifetime movie, a love with Filipino roots in a rare one. But never still in love with Filipino roots and working in Hollywood (well, there's Bob Schneider). Your [unreserved] comments, please.

I'm a Filipino-American but with an Irish last name. You can't get much more mixed up than that.

E-mail the columnist at rvnepomuceno_50@yahoo.com.

Title is flippant, but it's an earnest war picture

REVIEW

NEW YORK—THE TITLE SOUNDS cute and maybe even a little flippant, but "Flyboys" is an earnest war picture at core could possibly find.

Inspired by the Lafayette Escadrille, young Americans who volunteered to fly for the French military before the United States entered World War I, the movie combines traditional themes and reverse-arch high-tech imagery.

(You can keep your jokes about Snoopy and the Red Baron; there's not much room for humor here.)

Little is new or different in "Flyboys" — if the movie had come out 50 years ago, it might have starred Henry Fonda or Montgomery Clift — but there's a nice, workmanlike camaraderie among the men, the dogfights are clunkier-than-and the romance can be thrilling.

James Franco does his stoic, James Dean thing as Blaine Rawlings, a rebellious Texan who skips out for the Escadrille after the bank forecloses his family's ranch. In return he finds himself under the command of the no-nonsense Capt. Thibault (Jean Reno, perfectly cast).

Director Tony Bill, who won a Best Picture Oscar for producing "The Sting," explains why the other squadron members feel unnerved in sufficiently edgy early set-up scenes. The wealthy Briggs Lowry (Tyler Labine), hopes to make his hypercritical father proud; William Assten (Philip Winchester), a third-generation military man has a sweetheart back home; and Eugene Skinner (Abdul Salis), a black boxer living in France, wants to fight for the country that's been given so-stopping of him.

Martin Henderson is all swagger as Reed Crandall, a veteran pilot who's seen all his friends die in battle and whose arrogant, anti-social nature makes him the subject of rampant rumors.

Guess what? He's really a good guy. His enemy by the way is the Black Falcon, an old friend of the Red Baron's.)

They all learn to get along despite disparate backgrounds — though Skinner admits a bit too quickly over a 300-year-old bottle of cognac.

But their bond strengthens believably once they take to the skies. It's a mixture and they're members disbanded.

Chaste romance

Blaine also bonds with a young Parisian woman named Lucienne, with whom he begins a chaste romance over single bottles of bonbons (English-Assembly chaste? is probably it, but Jennifer Decker is so lovely in her film debut, you forgive this restrained little subplot. (Her previous also was up a during nightcrime movie where German soldiers invade her home, putting her and her young sister and nephew in danger.)

But the most engaging parts of the film are the dogfight sequences themselves, the planes swooping and zooming, diving and climbing, looking just like as if you're behind the controls—though not looking as fake as a video game. (You can see why George Lucas was inspired by this kind of flying when he was developing "Star Wars.")

And yes, maybe it's a little over the top when the Escadrille forget about a German zeppelin, but the ensuing explosions and fiery destruction are too killer to resist.

"Flyboys," an MGM release, runs 130 minutes. Two and a half stars out of four.

—Christy Lemire, AP

5 beauty tips from Maximo Oliveros

RUSHES

MAXIMAN Lopez a.k.a Maxima Oliveros

MAXI OLIVEROS SHARES THESE BEAUTY tips with teenagers like him. Yourself:

1) Wear lip gloss. Lotsa pa, tatay. Mascara and maybe a little bit of pale eyeshadow. Heavy makeup is not bagay for teens like us.

2) Don't wear foundation. This is for your Mama or Tita lang. Sa teenagers, cha-cha okay ka. Be yours lang, or kunat ng konting blush. We should just use baby powder—light and only for the skin, mamyan.

3) Wear cool clothes. Jeans, sleeveless and trendy shirts are ideal for young people because mobile siyang pantsuit. Wear your favorite colors. Don't forget the matching hair clips!

4) You sing Himotmot. Hey! If you're short or budget, just wear ordinary Bar Bags. Wa sila! Become more natural any way you want. Just buy flowers, beads, buttons or sequins and glue them on the straps.

5) Wear your hair a different way each day. Express your mood and personality. Use a different hair clip or ribbon for every occasion. Thing nag pabalay: Isog magsuwing mag-girl.

DJ LUCY P

MAX Luong

Beauty contained

Movie scene vs home scattered beauty. This month alone, we learned about Max ... and vice versa. DJ Andi 'n' Boots dedeir Mamita Mae-Anne, she was the second finalist. Pity to joke 'ha, since she the first time in a perfect 10." Guys, it's your turn to look. Agree or disagree?

Andi 'n' joins on Award Mondays this Thursdays, 6:45 p.m.

Max Luong [where?]

Join Max Luong, MTV Asia VJ. "Blam, especially his music, means everything to me. Music is my first love... and it'll be my last.

He hails as his passions: girls, and music.

Multi-lingual Luong, 28, was born in Malaysia to a Swiss mother and Chinese father. He grew up in Switzerland and just recently moved to Singapore for his MTV Asia gig. He's been here in Manila, watching—for an MTV series—and his own TV show, 'Riddled,' since Thursday, and leaves for home ... today!

MTV airs the series throughout October.

Reggae meets Bukista

The Love Child," blasting "Super Reggae" Morales says of Filipino WWE (World Wrestling Entertainment) superstar Eseel "The Samoan" Rufino, who was in the country recently for a quick visit.

"SUPERstruggle" and Bukista

New look for Clay

SANTA MONICA, California— After a year and a half away from the spotlight, Clay Aiken returns with an edgy new look and a tie from edgy new album.

"It's [just] a new shagginess but it's kind of like a artistic new look," says a casually dressed and scruffy-faced Aiken, sitting in an office at RCA Records.

His new thing is brand new. On his new album, "A Thousand Different Ways," Aiken covers 10 classic love songs and introduces four original tracks—a "challenge" issued by music mogul Clive Davis, who oversaw the project. Aiken says he was initially reluctant.

"I don't feel I had the credibility or the background to go in and put the Clay Aiken sound on somebody else's song," says Aiken, one of "Season one Idol's" most successful stars.

Despite his misgivings, he and his team of producers rearranged and reinterpreted each track, from Kenny Loggins's "I Want to Know What Love Is" to Sally Fletcher's "How We Come Again," to make them Aiken's own. AP

CLAY Aiken

Precious Fergie

NEW YORK—Black-Eyed Peas' sexy-sultry-element Fergie, on-going solo with her debut CD "The Dutchess" and the explosive submission of 13 tracks—"There are a lot of times when I really dig deep on this album, whereas with the guys, I don't know if there's enough of a message to go into all of my dramas or love affairs." AP

FERGIE

President's chance 5

BEVERLY HILLS— Interior Secretary Gale Norton, Sofia Coppola and Sally Field are among President Bush's picks to be honored for their achievements in the entertainment industry at its 28th annual Mentors in Hollywood event.

Evan Rachel Wood received the spotlight Award for Emerging Talent at the dinner ceremony held Wednesday at the Beverly Hills Hotel.

"I look up to all these women so much and I've been standing these since I was seventeen," the 19-year-old actress told AP Television News. "They're why I do what I do, so I'm just very honored."

Blanchett, who won a best supporting actress Oscar for "The Aviator," said she was "overwhelmed ... Struggle more so than any award ceremony because I think the movies failed such an incredible bunch of women."

Previous honorees include Anjelica Huston, Laura Dern, Sherry Lansing, Meryl Streep, Michelle Pfeiffer and Susan Sarandon. AP

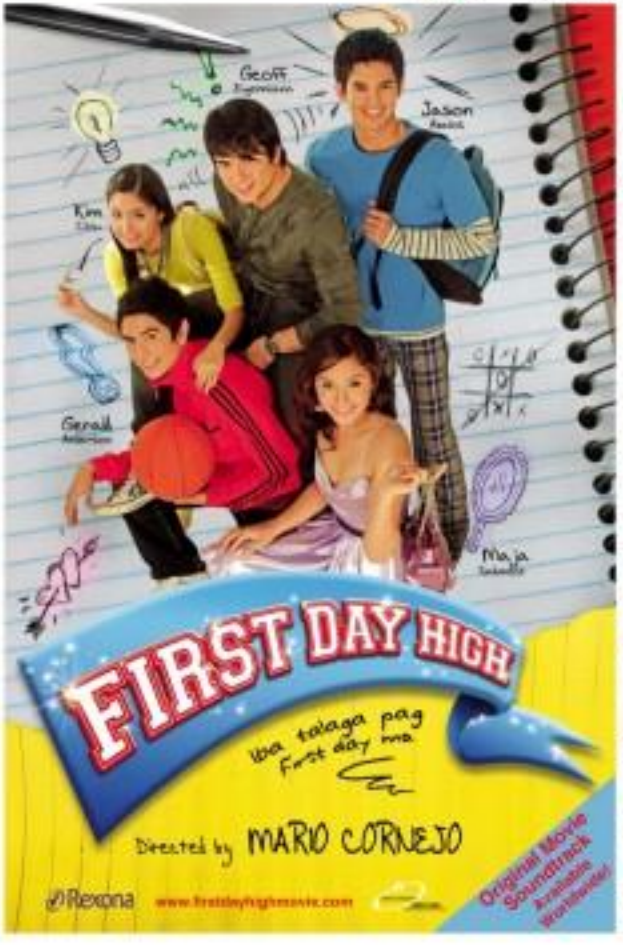
CATE Blanchett

Sandra ill scared!

NASHVILLE — Actress Sandra Bullock's film company is suing the state's mental health agency in which it testifies her attorneys where a man she accuses of stalking her is released from a mental health facility.

The lawsuit, filed Sept. 13, calls on the health agency to comply with a California state order requiring the institution to treat Thomas James Weldon's release from Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute. Bullock, 42, has said in court documents that Weldon followed her from Nashville to Texas to California, sent her e-mails and faxes and left voice mail messages. AP

SANDRA Bullock

Only last year

This week last year ... Antonio Banderas married Jenna Dewan in Beverly Hills.